



# AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

Selected by

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## A VINTNER

HANGS out his bush to show he has not good wine ; for that, the proverb says, needs it not. He had rather sell bad wine than good, that stands him in no more ; for it makes men sooner drunk, and then they are the easier over-reckoned. By the knaveries he acts aboveboard, which every man sees, one may easily take a measure of those he does underground in his cellar ; for he that will pick a man's pocket to his face will not stick to use him worse in private, when he knows nothing of it. He does not only spoil and destroy his wines, but an ancient reverend proverb, with brewing and racking, that says, "*In vino veritas*" ; for there is no truth in his, but all false and sophisticated ; for he can counterfeit wine as cunningly as Apelles did grapes, and cheat men with it, as he did birds. (He is an anti-Christian cheat, for Christ turned water into wine, and he turns wine into water.) He scores all his reckonings upon two tables, made like those of the Ten Commandments, that he may be put in mind to break them as oft as possibly he can ; especially that of stealing and bearing false witness against his neighbour, when he draws him bad wine, and swears it is good, and that he can take more for the pipe than the wine will yield him by the bottle—a trick that a Jesuit taught him to cheat his own conscience with. When he is found to over-reckon notoriously, he has one common evasion for all, and that is, to say it was a mistake ; by which he means, that he thought they had not been sober enough to

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discover it ; for if it had passed, there had been no error at all in the case.

SAMUEL BUTLER (*b.* 1612)

### A GLIMPSE OF QUEEN VICTORIA

I MUST now nerve myself to recount the story of one of the most appalling blunders I ever committed in my life ; even to-day, though I can laugh about it, the thought of it gives me a slight sinking ! At the moment, though conscious of having sinned against ritual, I did not realise the full enormity of my crime—you must have been bred to Courts to do that. And though, as time went on, I grasped it exhaustively, somehow or other I shrank from cross-questioning my friend the Empress Eugénie on the subject. For one thing, so great was her kindness that she would have attenuated my *faux pas* ; for another, knowing what her agony must have been as she watched her young friend's proceedings, I fancied she would prefer not to live through it all again ! Finally, truth to tell, the whole thing was a humiliation to me to think of ! Despicable, no doubt, to take it as hard as all that, but so it was.

Why no one prepared me for the situation I was about to become part of, why no one gave me a hint how to comport myself in it, I cannot imagine. The Empress was always thinking out and guarding against eventualities in what seemed to me an almost feverish fashion, yet this time she said not a word, and I can only suppose she felt certain that my darkness would be enlightened by one of the Maids of Honour. But it was not, and when we left the dinner-table, being the only guest of my sex present, I gaily headed the procession drawing-roomwards, my mind innocently set on making myself agreeable when I should get

## A GLIMPSE OF QUEEN VICTORIA

there. It was a large room with deep bay-windows, and the first thing I noticed was that the sofas and chairs were tightly upholstered in the gay Stuart tartan—a proof that to be Queen of Scotland involves painful aesthetic concessions.

On a large hearthrug—tartan too, I think—in front of the grate, in which I rather fancy a few logs burned (though given her Majesty's hardy habits it seems improbable), stood the Queen, conversing with the Empress in a lively manner. Evidently, I said to myself, the animating effects of a good dinner may be counted on even at the less frivolous European Courts.

Leading up to the two august ladies was an avenue composed of Royal personages—ranged, as I afterwards found out, in order of precedence, the highest in rank being closest to the hearthrug—which avenue, broadening towards its base, gradually became mere ladies and gentlemen of the Court, and finally petered out in a group of Maids of Honour huddled ingloriously in the bay-window. What I ought to have done, I believe, was to stand rigid and silent among these last, try discreetly to catch the eye of the Queen and the Princesses, curtsy profoundly when successful, and await events. Will it be believed that what I did do was to advance unconcernedly up the avenue, with a polite intention to say “How do you do” to the Queen?

If a young dog strays up the aisle during church no one says anything, no one does anything, but, none the less, he soon becomes aware that something is wrong. Even so, as the distance between myself and the hearthrug diminished, did I become aware that something was very wrong indeed; my cheerful confidence waned and my step faltered. I saw the Queen slightly turn her head, look at me for a second as if I were some strange insect, and resume her conversation with the Empress. If I had been a Brob-

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dingnagian spider as big as a Newfoundland she would not have acted differently. Someone would remove the creature ; that was enough. I did not catch the Empress's eye, but I now know that since she could not shriek : " Mon Dieu, n'avancez pas ! " she must have wished the earth would open and swallow her up. At this moment dear, human Princess Christian, who had come more in contact with low life than the Queen, stepped forward and shook hands with me—and somehow or other, I know not how, I backed away into the obscurity from which I should never have emerged.

Afterwards I heard all about that Hearthrug, and could gauge the dimensions of my audacity. It was as sacred a carpet as exists outside Mohammedanism, and the distance from it at which people were permitted to station themselves—if invited to come near it at all—was the measure of their rank and importance. Only Crowned Heads trod it as a right, or occasionally , as supreme honour, some very favourite minister, like Lord Beaconsfield. If such as I had set foot upon it, as, but for the blessed intervention of Princess Christian, I might have done . . . but, no ! A miracle would have been wrought, a thunderbolt would have fallen upon a tartan sofa and created a diversion, something—anything would have happened rather than such sacrilege could have been permitted !

DAME ETHEL SMYTH

## THE BEGGAR

I REMEMBER reading a story of an old gentleman who used to walk out every afternoon with a gold-headed cane, in the fields opposite Baltimore House, which were then open, only with footpaths crossing them. He was frequently accosted by a beggar with

## MY TAILOR

a wooden leg, to whom he gave money, which only made him more importunate. One day, when he was more troublesome than usual, a well-dressed person happening to come up, and observing how saucy the fellow was, said to the gentleman, "Sir, if you will lend me your cane for a moment, I'll give him a good thrashing for his impertinence." The old gentleman, smiling at the proposal, handed him his cane, which the other no sooner was going to apply to the shoulders of the culprit, than he immediately whipped off his wooden leg, and scampered off with great alacrity, and his chastiser after him as hard as he could go. The faster the one ran the faster the other followed him, brandishing the cane, to the great astonishment of the gentleman who owned it, till having fairly crossed the fields, they suddenly turned a corner, and nothing more was seen of either of them.

WILLIAM HAZLITT

## MY TAILOR

HE always stands there—and has stood these thirty years—in the back part of his shop, his tape woven about his neck, a smile of welcome on his face, waiting to greet me.

"Something in a serge," he says, "or perhaps in a tweed?"

There are only these two choices open to us. We have had no others for thirty years. It is too late to alter now.

"A serge, yes," continues my tailor; "something in a dark blue, perhaps." He says it with all the gusto of a new idea, as if the thought of dark blue had sprung up as an inspiration. "Mr. Jennings" (this is his assistant), "kindly take down some of those dark blues."

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"Ah," he exclaims, "now here is an excellent thing." His manner as he says this is such as to suggest that by sheer good fortune and blind chance he has stumbled upon a thing among a million.

He lifts one knee and drapes the cloth over it, standing upon one leg. He knows that in this attitude it is hard to resist him. Cloth to be appreciated as cloth must be viewed over the bended knee of a tailor with one leg in the air. My tailor can stand in this way indefinitely, on one leg in a sort of ecstasy, a kind of local paralysis.

"Would that make up well?" I ask him.

"Admirably," he answers.

I have no real reason to doubt it. I have never seen any reason why cloth should not make up well. But I always ask the question as I know that he expects it and it pleases him. There ought to be a fair give and take in such things. "You don't think it at all loud?" I say. He always likes to be asked this.

"Oh, no, very quiet indeed. In fact we always recommend serge as extremely quiet."

I have never had a wild suit in my life. But it is well to ask.

Then he measures me—round the chest, nowhere else. All the other measures were taken years ago. Even the chest measure is only done—and I know it—to please me. I do not really grow.

"A *little* fuller in the chest," my tailor muses. Then he turns to his assistant: "Mr. Jennings, a little fuller in the chest—half an inch on to the chest, please."

It is a kind of fiction. Growth around the chest is flattering even to the humblest of us.

"Yes," my tailor goes on—he uses "yes" without any special meaning—"and shall we say a week from Tuesday? Mr. Jennings, a week from Tuesday, please."

"And will you please," I say, "send the bill to —?" but my tailor waves this aside. He does not

## MY TAILOR

care to talk about the bill. It would only give pain to both of us to speak of it.

The bill is a matter we deal with solely by correspondence, and that only in a decorous and refined style never calculated to hurt. I am sure from the tone of my tailor's letters that he would never send the bill, or ask for the amount, were it not that from time to time he is himself unfortunately "pressed" owing to "large consignments from Europe." But for these heavy consignments, I am sure I should never need to pay him. It is true that I have sometimes thought to observe that these consignments are apt to arrive when I pass the limit of owing for two suits and order a third. But this can only be a mere coincidence.

Yet the bill, as I say, is a thing that we never speak of. Instead of it my tailor passes to the weather. Ordinary people always begin with this topic. Tailors, I notice, end with it. It is only broached after the suit is ordered, never before.

"Pleasant weather we are having," he says. It is never other, so I notice, with him. Perhaps the order of a suit itself is a little beam of sunshine.

Then we move together towards the front of the store on the way to the outer door.

"Nothing to-day, I suppose," says my tailor, "in shirtings?"

"No, thank you."

This is again a mere form. In thirty years I have never bought any shirtings from him. Yet he asks the question with the same winsomeness as he did thirty years ago.

"And nothing, I suppose, in collaring or in hosiery?"

This is again futile. Collars I buy elsewhere and hosiery I have never worn.

Thus we walk to the door, in friendly colloquy. Somehow, if he failed to speak of shirtings and hosiery, I should feel as if a familiar cord had broken.

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At the door we part.

“Good afternoon,” he says. “A week from Tuesday—yes—good afternoon.”

. . . . .

Such is—or was—our calm unsullied intercourse, unvaried or at least broken only by consignments from Europe. I say it *was*, that is until just the other day. And then, coming to the familiar door for my customary summer suit, I found that he was there no more. There were people in the store, unloading shelves and piling cloth and taking stock. And they told me that he was dead. It came to me with a strange shock. I had not thought it possible. He seemed—he should have been—immortal.

They said the worry of his business had helped to kill him. I could not have believed it. He always seemed so still and tranquil—wearing his tape about his neck and marking measures and holding cloth against his leg beside the sunlight of the window in the back part of the shop. Can a man die of that? Yet he had been “going behind,” they said (however that is done), for years. His wife, they told me, would be left badly off. I had never conceived him as having a wife. But it seemed that he had, and a daughter, too, at a conservatory of music—yet he never spoke of her—and that he himself was musical and played the flute, and was the sidesman of a church—yet he never referred to it to me. In fact, in thirty years we never spoke of religion. It was hard to connect him with the idea of it.

As I went out I seemed to hear his voice still saying, “And nothing to-day in shirtings?” I was sorry I had never bought any.

There is, I am certain, a deep moral in this. But I will not try to draw it. It might appear too obvious.

STEPHEN LEACOCK

## THE SCHOOLMASTER

### THE SCHOOLMASTER

My reading has been lamentably desultory and immethodical. Odd, out of the way, old English plays, and treatises, have supplied me with most of my notions and ways of feeling. In everything that relates to *science*, I am a whole Encyclopaedia behind the rest of the world. I should have scarcely cut a figure among the franklins, or country gentlemen, in King John's days. I know less geography than a schoolboy of six weeks' standing. To me a map of old Ortelius is as authentic as Arrowsmith. I do not know whereabout Africa merges into Asia ; whether Ethiopia lie in one or other of those great divisions ; nor can form the remotest conjecture of the position of New South Wales, or Van Diemen's Land. Yet do I hold a correspondence with a very dear friend in the first named of these two *Terrae Incognitae*. I have no astronomy. I do not know where to look for the Bear, or Charles's Wain ; the place of any star ; or the name of any of them at sight. I guess at Venus only by her brightness—and if the sun on some portentous morn were to make his first appearance in the West, I verily believe that, while all the world were gasping in apprehension about me, I alone should stand unterrified, from sheer incuriosity and want of observation. Of history and chronology I possess some vague points, such as one cannot help picking up in the course of miscellaneous study ; but I never deliberately sat down to a chronicle even of my own country. I have most dim apprehensions of the four great monarchies ; and sometimes the Assyrian, sometimes the Persian, floats as *first* in my fancy. I make the wildest conjectures concerning Egypt and her shepherd kings. My friend M., with great painstaking, got me to think I understood the first proposition in Euclid, but gave me over in despair

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at the second. I am entirely unacquainted with the modern languages ; and, like a better man than myself, have “small Latin and less Greek.” I am a stranger to the shapes and texture of the commonest trees, herbs, flowers—not from the circumstance of my being town-born—for I should have brought the same inobservant spirit into the world with me had I first seen it “on Devon’s leafy shores”—and am no less at a loss among purely town-objects, tools, engines, mechanic processes. Not that I affect ignorance—but my head has not many mansions, nor spacious ; and I have been obliged to fill it with such cabinet curiosities as it can hold without aching. I sometimes wonder how I have passed my probation with so little discredit in the world, as I have done, upon so meagre a stock. But the fact is, a man may do very well with a very little knowledge, and scarce be found out, in mixed company ; everybody is so much more ready to produce his own than to call for a display of your acquisitions. But in a *tête-à-tête* there is no shuffling. The truth will out. There is nothing which I dread so much as the being left alone for a quarter of an hour with a sensible, well-informed man that does not know me. I lately got into a dilemma of this sort.

In one of my daily jaunts between Bishopsgate and Shacklewell, the coach stopped to take up a staid-looking gentleman, about the wrong side of thirty, who was giving his parting directions (while the steps were adjusting), in a tone of mild authority, to a tall youth, who seemed to be neither his clerk, his son, nor his servant, but something partaking of all three. The youth was dismissed, and we drove on. As we were the sole passengers, he naturally enough addressed his conversation to me ; and we discussed the merits of the fare, the civility and punctuality of the driver, the circumstance of an opposition coach having been lately set up, with the probabilities of its success—to

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all which I was enabled to return pretty satisfactory answers, having been drilled into this kind of etiquette by some years' daily practice of riding to and fro in the stage aforesaid—when he suddenly alarmed me by a startling question, whether I had seen the show of prize cattle that morning in Smithfield? Now, as I had not seen it, and do not greatly care for such sort of exhibitions, I was obliged to return a cold negative. He seemed a little mortified, as well as astonished, at my declaration, as (it appeared) he was just come fresh from the sight, and doubtless had hoped to compare notes on the subject. However, he assured me that I had lost a fine treat, as it far exceeded the show of last year. We were now approaching Norton Folgate, when the sight of some shop-goods *ticketed* freshened him up into a dissertation upon the cheapness of cottons this spring. I was now a little in heart, as the nature of my morning avocations had brought me into some sort of familiarity with the raw material; and I was surprised to find how eloquent I was becoming on the state of the Indian market—when, presently, he dashed my incipient vanity to the earth at once, by inquiring whether I had ever made any calculation as to the value of the rental of all the retail shops in London. Had he asked of me what song the Siren sang, or what name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among women, I might, with Sir Thomas Browne, have hazarded a “wide solution.” My companion saw my embarrassment, and, the alms-houses beyond Shoreditch just coming in view, with great good nature and dexterity, shifted his conversation to the subject of public charities; which led to the comparative merits of provision for the poor in past and present times, with observations on the old monastic institutions and charitable orders; but, finding me rather dimly impressed with some glimmering notions from old poetic associations, than strongly fortified

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with any speculations reducible to calculation on the subject, he gave the matter up ; and the country beginning to open more and more upon us, as we approached the turnpike at Kingsland (the destined termination of his journey), he put a home thrust upon me, in the most unfortunate position he could have chosen, by advancing some queries relative to the North Pole Expedition. While I was muttering out something about the panorama of those strange regions (which I had actually seen) by way of parrying the question, the coach stopping relieved me from any further apprehensions. My companion getting out, left me in the comfortable possession of my ignorance ; and I heard him, as he went off, putting questions to an outside passenger, who had alighted with him, regarding an epidemic disorder that had been rife about Dalston, and which my friend assured him had gone through five or six schools in that neighbourhood. The truth now flashed upon me, that my companion was a schoolmaster ; and that the youth, whom he had parted from at our first acquaintance, must have been one of the bigger boys, or the usher.—He was evidently a kind-hearted man, who did not seem so much desirous of provoking discussion by the questions which he put, as of obtaining information at any rate. It did not appear that he took any interest, either, in such kind of inquiries for their own sake ; but that he was in some way bound to seek for knowledge.

CHARLES LAMB

## MR. RAMSBOTTOM

WILLIAM saw a stout man of about fifty approaching them. He was very broad and heavy, but nevertheless he seemed to bounce along. As he drew nearer, he beamed upon them. His rimless spectacles glittered

## MR. RAMSBOTTOM

with a jovial recognition. His clean-shaven face almost as wide and flat as a dinner plate, shone with his appreciation of this happy moment. Introduced as Mr. Ramsbottom, he shook William's hand with enthusiasm.

"Very pleased to meet you," he cried, stepping back and looking at William with the greatest interest, as if William's whole appearance was both remarkable and beautiful. "It's good of you to come. It is. It's good of you. And don't mind me, Mr. Dursley. Ah'm Lancasheer, you see—a Lanc'sher lad, if you like—and Ah say what Ah think and it all comes out, like emptying a chest of drawers—and you mustn't mind me. That's right, isn't it, Commander? Well, we're all here." Then suddenly his enormous smile vanished, and he looked earnestly from one to the other. "Mr. Dursley, Commander, you'll both take a drop o' something before we start? What's it to be? Cocktail or drop o' sherry or what?"

"I don't think I want anything, thanks," said William.

"Nay, you must have something," cried Mr. Ramsbottom reproachfully. "So must you, Commander. 'Ere, Albert——" and he called a waiter, to whom they were compelled to give an order.

"Do you know that waiter, too?" asked the Commander.

"Who, him? Yes, Ah know him. Albert, his name is. Only been 'ere a week. He used to be at the Metro. at Blackpool, Albert did. Ah knew him well there. You ask him. He's got a little girl that's won five prizes with the concertina, and she's going on the stage with it. He was telling all about her yesterday. Ah'll tell you her name in a minute." Mr. Ramsbottom tried to think of her name, but catching sight of the Commander's smile, he laughed and then turned to William. "He laughs at me 'cos Ah know

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all about everybody, but Ah say—damn it all, if you're stopping at a place you might as well know the other folk, and Ah don't care a brass button whether they're waiters or barmaids or what they are so long as they've got a civil tongue in their heads. And if it hadn't been for the staff 'ere, Ah'd have gone days and days dumb and speechless.

“Have you been here long?” asked William.

“Nearly two months,” replied Mr. Ramsbottom, looking solemn. “Ah came for my 'ealth. Doctor told me to come 'ere. Ah'd two doctors and a specialist.” At this moment the waiter arrived with the drinks, and Mr. Ramsbottom immediately sat up and became bustling and genial again. “Well, 'ere we are, gentlemen. That's yours, Mr. Dursley. That's yours, Commander. Well, 'ere's the best. That's good stoof.” He smacked his thick lips appreciatively, nodded his head, and beamed at them through his glasses. “Now what was Ah talking about?”

“You were talking about your health,” William prompted.

“So Ah was.” And instantly Mr. Ramsbottom began to droop and dwindle; the light faded from his eyes; his cheeks fell in; his whole figure sagged; he was a sick man. “Well, Ah'd two doctors and a specialist. Ah couldn't eat and Ah couldn't sleep. Dizziness, too—oh dear, awful dizziness! And Ah'd a pain in my back—just round there—no, a bit lower down—there—oh! dear, dear, dear, Ah didn't know what to do with myself half the time. Chaps I knew in business or at clubs said to me, ‘Nay, Johnny Ramsbottom, you're looking bad.’ And Ah told 'em. Ah said: ‘Ay, an' Ah'm feeling bad.’

“Couldn't eat, couldn't sleep, couldn't attend to my business properly. Ah'd got a buzzing in my 'ead like a circular saw. Ah said to myself, ‘If this goes on, Ah might as well hand my checks in. Life's

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not worth living.' Mind you, Ah'd always had a bit o' bother with my inside.

"Anyhow, Ah went to one doctor, and he says, 'It's your kidneys. That's what's wrong with you—your kidneys.' Wait a minute. Dinner's up. We might as well go and peck a bit."

On their way to the dining-room, Mr. Ramsbottom continued his recital, and without troubling to lower his voice. "Well, Ah went to another doctor, and he said, 'Ah'm sorry to say, Mr. Ramsbottom, it's your heart that's at fault.' Ah wasn't surprised either, 'cos Ah'd always had an idea my heart wasn't all it should be. Ah'd noticed it knocking a bit for years, you might say. However, Ah saw a specialist too, best man in Manchester, and he pretended to make light of it, and he sent me to Harrogate first, and then when Ah went back, he told me to get some medicine to take, put me on a diet, and said if Ah could afford it Ah'd to knock off business for a year or so and get out o' Manchester and find some fresh air. Then Ah went back to my own doctor, and he said come down 'ere. So Ah did."

"I hope you're feeling better now," said William politely. Mr. Ramsbottom halted at the dining-room door to give this question his full attention. "Well, am Ah? It's a question, that. In a way Ah am, Ah dare say. Ah've lost that buzziness and dizziness and Ah eat and sleep better, but Ah'm not right, you know—oh dear no! Ah'm not right, and Ah never will be. Ah'll have to look after my inside. An' Ah still get that pain i' my back. Just a sharp twinge, you know, Mr. Dursley, a right sharp twinge now and again, like as if somebody might be running a red-hot knitting-needle into me. Excuse me a minute." He turned aside, in the dining-room, to greet three melancholy girls in black, who evidently constituted the Permanent Resident Orchestra. They

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smiled at him wanly above their instruments. The pianist was arranging some music, and the violinist and the 'cellist were tuning up. It was the 'cellist, the most melancholy of the melancholy trio, whom Mr. Ramsbottom addressed.

"Have you heard from your mother, Miss Grierson?" he inquired.

"I had a letter to-day, thank you, Mr. Ramsbottom," replied the sad musician. "She's a bit better, but she'll have to spend another fortnight in bed."

"That's nothing so long as she's better," cried Mr. Ramsbottom. "Is it now? A fair answer to a fair question. No, of course it isn't. You tell her from me to sit up and get some good stoof into her, Miss Grierson. And play us a few nice pieces to-night. Do your best."

After this short exchange, he led the way down the room, which was large and nearly empty, to a table set for three near the fire.

"Didn't know you knew the orchestra too, Ramsbottom," said the Commander, as they sat down.

"Oh yes, know 'em well by this time. Ah know all the pieces they play too, which is a pity. Ah'm getting a bit sick of most of 'em. That's Miss Grierson Ah was talking to, and her mother's poorly. She's been upset about it. She comes from just outside Birmingham, and she's a nice quiet girl, though she can't play that 'cello for toffy. You listen when they start. She gets so far off the note sometimes it brings tears to your eyes, like eating little green gooseberries. She's got no more ear than this table. What d'you think of the table? Done it nicely for us, haven't they? Ah told 'em Ah wanted it special to-night. And they're cooking a special dinner, too. They're careful what they give me now, Ah can tell you, Mr. Dursley. Commander knows all about that, don't you?"

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"I do," said the Commander, suddenly producing fifty more fine little wrinkles round his eyes. "Ramsbottom here is a great authority on food. He's an epicure, a gourmet."

"Nay, Ah don't say that. But Ah do like good stoof. Ah've always been used to good stoof, and Ah know it when Ah see it and taste it, which is more than most people do. And Ah'm partly in the business, you know—'cos Ah'm a wholesale grocer—and Ah take an interest in what Ah eat and drink. First two days Ah was 'ere, Ah just tasted what they gave me and said nothing. Then Ah went to see the manager. 'Ah'm stopping 'ere some time,' Ah told him. 'Ah know you are, Mr. Ramsbottom,' he said. 'But Ah'm not stopping another day if you don't give me better stoof to eat,' Ah told him. 'Why, what d'you mean?' he said. 'We only use the best provisions, and our kitchen has a very good name.' This made me laugh. 'If you believe that,' Ah told him, 'then somebody's cheating you.' He stared at me. 'What's wrong with it?' he said. 'Oh, Ah'll tell you,' Ah said, and Ah did. Ah told him, to start with, the bread was poor quality, too much alum and potato in the flour, and they'd been putting a lot of margarine in his butter, and selling him the cheapest coffee on the market. Ah told him if they were going to get their soup out of tins, they'd better get some better brands, and Ah said they'd been using some bad fat in the kitchen and didn't seem over-particular about cleaning the pans, and that bits o' rock salmon shouldn't be called sole, and that their prime English beef must have been kidnapped and sent round the world because it had just been frozen. 'And that cake you serve with afternoon tea,' Ah told him. 'If you're paying more than sevenpence a pound for that, you're being swindled.' 'Ridiculous,' he said. 'Ah'd like to see you buy cake like that at sevenpence a pound.' 'Oh,

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you would, would you?' Ah said. 'Well, Ah can let you have as much as you like of cake that quality at sixpence a pound, and Ah'll book the order now—much as you like. Only don't offer it to me at tea-time, 'cos Ah don't eat stoof like that—it's muck. Ah like good stoof,' Ah told him. 'And you can't diddle me, Ah know too much about it.' And Ah've not done badly since. They look after me. The dinner you're going to have now mightn't look as good on paper as the one they're offering everybody. But don't you believe it. It'll be plain and simple, but it'll be all good stoof, something to nourish you."

William, staring at Mr. Ramsbottom's great flat face and bursting shoulders, thought that nourishment was the last thing his host needed. He said nothing, being busy wondering, not without awe, what would happen if Mr. Ramsbottom suddenly found himself grappling with the food at the Lugmouth Packet. Dare he ask him to a meal there? The idea fascinated him. He had a vision of Mr. Ramsbottom, a knight-errant of "good stoof," bearding the gloomy manageress in her cabbage-haunted cave. Meanwhile, the dinner they were eating proved that Mr. Ramsbottom was not merely boasting. It was plain, but it was undeniably good stuff.

"That's the trouble nowadays," Mr. Ramsbottom observed, with the curious self-satisfaction that always accompanies this sort of statement; as if the speaker had been personally responsible for the Past, but had not been allowed to have any hand in shaping the Present. "You can't get good stoof. There's many an old working chap in Lancashire or Yorkshire who's getting better stoof to eat than your millionaires. And why? Because he's got a wife who does everything herself and sees that he still gets some good stoof. Money won't buy it, unless you're taking trouble as well. Ah know. You'd be surprised. You know

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the Colossal Luxurious Hotel in the West End? All right. Well, you get good stoof there, don't you?"

"Yes. I suppose so," said William, who had never been in the Colossal Luxurious.

"Well, you don't, then. It's all fancy and lah-di-dah, and maybe it looks well, but there isn't any good stoof in it. Ah wouldn't be paid to go and eat there—Ah wouldn't, Ah wouldn't be paid. Give me two tea-cakes—not the bits o' things you get down 'ere, but two proper big home-made tea-cakes—and some fresh butter, and a pot of tea that's mashed in the right way, with water just come to the boil and in a clean fresh teapot—give me that, and you've given me a meal Ah'd rather sit down to than anything they do at the Colossal Luxurious. And why? Because it 'ud be all good stoof."

William would have liked to have asked this enthusiast for pure wholesome food how he came to be so elaborately wrong in his inside, but he had not the courage. Mr. Ramsbottom's large face, which at this moment was beaming and glistening, was certainly not that of a healthy man: it was too pasty and oily and sweaty. In truth, he was not a very prepossessing personage; and William was not sure that he liked the man's rather dominating manner and loud flat voice. Yet there *was* something likable about him, William decided. His immense gusto had an infectious quality, and though there might be a glimmer of folly in everything he did or said, yet he was obviously no fool. He prided himself on knowing a great many facts about this world, and he did not do this without reason. Thus, later in the dinner, he learned that William was in the malting business, and immediately he began talking about malting in a very knowing fashion, so that William could not fail to be impressed. What was more important, however, was the stout man's enormous fund, or rather

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his flood or volcanic eruption, of good-humour, which was not something negative, a mere absence of bad temper or intolerance, but a positive force, a huge drive of well-wishing.

J. B. PRIESTLEY

### THE MAN IN BLACK

THOUGH fond of many acquaintances, I desire an intimacy only with a few. The man in black whom I have often mentioned is one whose friendship I could wish to acquire, because he possesses my esteem. His manners, it is true, are tinctured with some strange inconsistencies ; and he may be justly termed an humorist in a nation of humorists. Though he is generous even to profusion, he affects to be thought a prodigy of parsimony and prudence ; though his conversation be replete with the most sordid and selfish maxims, his heart is dilated with the most unbounded love. I have known him profess himself a man-hater, while his cheek was glowing with compassion ; and while his looks were softened into pity, I have heard him use the language of the most unbounded ill-nature. Some affect humanity and tenderness, others boast of having such dispositions from nature ; but he is the only man I ever knew who seemed ashamed of his natural benevolence. He takes as much pains to hide his feelings as any hypocrite would to conceal his indifference ; but on every unguarded moment the mask drops off, and reveals him to the most superficial observer.

In one of our late excursions into the country, happening to discourse upon the provision that was made for the poor in England, he seemed amazed how any of his countrymen could be so foolishly weak as to relieve occasional objects of charity, when the laws had made such ample provision for their support. " In

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every parish house," says he, "the poor are supplied with food, clothes, fire, and a bed to lie on ; they want no more, I desire no more myself ; yet still they seem discontented. I am surprised at the inactivity of our magistrates, in not taking up such vagrants, who are only a weight upon the industrious ; I am surprised that the people are found to relieve them, when they must be at the same time sensible that it, in some measure, encourages idleness, extravagance, and imposture. Were I to advise any man for whom I had the least regard, I would caution him by all means not to be imposed upon by their false pretences : let me assure you, sir, they are impostors, every one of them, and rather merit a prison than relief."

He was proceeding in this strain earnestly, to dissuade me from an imprudence of which I am seldom guilty, when an old man, who still had about him the remnants of tattered finery, implored our compassion. He assured us that he was no common beggar, but forced into the shameful profession, to support a dying wife and five hungry children. Being prepossessed against such falsehoods, his story had not the least influence upon me ; but it was quite otherwise with the man in black ; I could see it visibly operate upon his countenance, and effectually interrupt his harangue. I could easily perceive, that his heart burned to relieve the five starving children, but he seemed ashamed to discover his weakness to me. While he thus hesitated between compassion and pride, I pretended to look another way, and he seized this opportunity of giving the poor petitioner a piece of silver, bidding him at the same time, in order that I should not hear, go work for his bread, and not tease passengers with such impertinent falsehoods for the future.

As he had fancied himself quite unperceived, he continued, as we proceeded, to rail against beggars

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with as much animosity as before ; he threw in some episodes on his own amazing prudence and economy, with his profound skill in discovering impostors ; he explained the manner in which he would deal with beggars were he a magistrate, hinted at enlarging some of the prisons for their reception, and told two stories of ladies that were robbed by beggarmen. He was beginning a third to the same purpose, when a sailor with a wooden leg once more crossed our walks, desiring our pity, and blessing our limbs. I was for going on without taking any notice, but my friend looking wistfully upon the poor petitioner, bid me stop, and he would show me with how much ease he could at any time detect an impostor.

He now, therefore, assumed a look of importance, and in an angry tone began to examine the sailor, demanding in what engagement he was thus disabled and rendered unfit for service. The sailor replied, in a tone as angrily as he, that he had been an officer on board a private ship of war, and that he had lost his leg abroad in defence of those who did nothing at home. At this reply, all my friend's importance vanished in a moment ; he had not a single question more to ask ; he now only studied what method he should take to relieve him unobserved. He had, however, no easy part to act, as he was obliged to preserve the appearance of ill-nature before me, and yet relieve himself by relieving the sailor. Casting, therefore, a furious look upon some bundles of chips which the fellow carried in a string at his back, my friend demanded how he sold his matches ; but not waiting for a reply, desired, in a surly tone, to have a shilling's worth. The sailor seemed at first surprised at his demand, but soon recollected himself, and presenting his whole bundle, " Here, master," says he, " take all my cargo, and a blessing into the bargain."

It is impossible to describe with what an air of

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triumph my friend marched off with his new purchase; he assured me, that he was firmly of opinion that those fellows must have stolen their goods, who could thus afford to sell them for half value. He informed me of several different uses to which those chips might be applied; he expatiated largely upon the savings that would result from lighting candles with a match instead of thrusting them into the fire. He averred, that he would as soon have parted with a tooth as his money to those vagabonds, unless for some valuable consideration. I cannot tell how long this panegyric upon frugality and matches might have continued, had not his attention been called off by another object more distressful than either of the former. A woman in rags, with one child in her arms and another on her back, was attempting to sing ballads, but with such a mournful voice, that it was difficult to determine whether she was singing or crying. A wretch who, in the deepest distress, still aimed at good humour, was an object my friend was by no means capable of withstanding; his vivacity and his discourse were instantly interrupted; upon this occasion his very dissimulation had forsaken him. Even in my presence he immediately applied his hands to his pockets, in order to relieve her; but guess his confusion when he found he had already given away all the money he carried about him to former objects. The misery painted in the woman's visage was not half so strongly expressed as the agony in his. He continued to search for some time, but to no purpose, till, at length recollecting himself, with a face of ineffable good-nature, as he had no money, he put into her hands his shilling's worth of matches:

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

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### MR. TULLIVER AND HIS RELATIVES

“MR. TULLIVER,” said Mrs. Tulliver, interrupting her husband in his talk with Mr. Deane, “it’s time now to tell the children’s aunts and uncles what you’re thinking of doing with Tom, isn’t it?”

“Very well,” said Mr. Tulliver, rather sharply, “I’ve no objections to tell anybody what I mean to do with him. I’ve settled,” he added, looking towards Mr. Glegg and Mr. Deane, “I’ve settled to send him to a Mr. Stelling, a parson, down at King’s Lorton, there—an uncommon clever fellow, I understand—as’ll put him up to most things.”

There was a rustling demonstration of surprise in the company, such as you may have observed in a country congregation when they hear an allusion to their week-day affairs from the pulpit. It was equally astonishing to the aunts and uncles to find a parson introduced into Mr. Tulliver’s family arrangements. As for uncle Pullet, he could hardly have been more thoroughly obfuscated if Mr. Tulliver had said that he was going to send Tom to the Lord Chancellor: for uncle Pullet belonged to that extinct class of British yeomen who, dressed in good broadcloth, paid high rates and taxes, went to church, and ate a particularly good dinner or Sunday, without dreaming that the British constitution in Church and State had a traceable origin any more than the solar system and the fixed stars. It is melancholy, but true, that Mr. Pullet had the most confused idea of a bishop as a sort of a baronet, who might or might not be a clergyman; and as the rector of his own parish was a man of high family and fortune, the idea that a clergyman could be a schoolmaster was too remote from Mr. Pullet’s experience to be readily conceivable. I know it is difficult for people in these instructed times to believe

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in uncle Pullet's ignorance ; but let them reflect on the remarkable results of a great natural faculty under favouring circumstances. And uncle Pullet had a great natural faculty for ignorance. He was the first to give utterance to his astonishment.

"Why, what can you be going to send him to a parson for ?" he said, with an amazed twinkling in his eyes, looking at Mr. Glegg and Mr. Deane, to see if they showed any signs of comprehension.

"Why, because the parsons are the best school-masters, by what I can make out," said poor Mr. Tulliver, who, in the maze of this puzzling world, laid hold of any clue with great readiness and tenacity. "Jacobs at th' academy's no parson, and he's done very bad by the boy ; and I made up my mind, if I sent him to school again, it should be to somebody different to Jacobs. And this Mr. Stelling, by what I can make out, is the sort o' man I want. And I mean my boy to go to him at Midsummer," he concluded, in a tone of decision, tapping his snuff-box and taking a pinch.

"You'll have to pay a swinging half-yearly bill, then, eh, Tulliver ? The clergymen have highish notions, in general," said Mr. Deane, taking snuff vigorously, as he always did when wishing to maintain a neutral position.

"What ! do you think the parson'll teach him to know a good sample o' wheat when he sees it, neighbour Tulliver ?" said Mr. Glegg, who was fond of his jest ; and, having retired from business, felt that it was not only allowable but becoming in him to take a playful view of things.

"Why, you see, I've got a plan i' my head about Tom," said Mr. Tulliver, pausing after that statement and lifting up his glass.

"Well, if I may be allowed to speak, and it's seldom as I am," said Mrs. Glegg, with a tone of bitter mean-

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ing, "I should like to know what good is to come to the boy, by bringin' him up above his fortin'."

"Why," said Mr. Tulliver, not looking at Mrs. Glegg, but at the male part of his audience, "you see, I've made up my mind not to bring Tom up to my own business. I've had my thoughts about it all along, and I made up my mind by what I saw with Garnett and *his* son. I mean to put him to some business, as he can go into without capital, and I want to give him an eddication as he'll be even wi' the lawyers and folks, and put me up to a notion now an' then."

Mrs. Glegg emitted a long sort of guttural sound with closed lips, that smiled in mingled pity and scorn.

"It 'ud be a fine deal better for some people," she said, after that introductory note, "if they'd let the lawyers alone."

"Is he at the head of a grammar school, then, this clergyman—such as that at Market Bewley?" said Mr. Deane.

"No—nothing o' that," said Mr. Tulliver. "He won't take more than two or three pupils—and so he'll have the more time to attend to 'em, you know."

"Ah, and get his eddication done the sooner: they can't learn much at a time when there's so many of 'em," said uncle Pullet, feeling that he was getting quite an insight into this difficult matter.

"But he'll want the more pay, I doubt," said Mr. Glegg.

"Ay, ay, a cool hundred a-year—that's all," said Mr. Tulliver, with some pride at his own spirited course. "But then, you know, it's an investment; Tom's eddication 'ull be so much capital to him."

"Ay, there's something in that," said Mr. Glegg.

## MR. TULLIVER AND HIS RELATIVES

“ Well, well, neighbour Tulliver, you may be right, you may be right :—

‘ When land is gone and money’s spent,  
Then learning is most excellent.’

I remember seeing those two lines wrote on a window at Buxton. But us that have got no learning had better keep our money, eh, neighbour Pullet ? ” Mr. Glegg rubbed his knees and looked very pleasant.

“ Mr. Glegg, I wonder *at* you,” said his wife. “ It’s very unbecoming in a man o’ your age and belongings.”

“ What’s unbecoming, Mrs. G. ? ” said Mr. Glegg, winking pleasantly at the company. “ My new blue coat as I’ve got on ? ”

“ I pity your weakness, Mr. Glegg. I say it’s unbecoming to be making a joke when you see your own kin going headlong to ruin.”

“ If you mean me by that,” said Mr. Tulliver, considerably nettled, “ you needn’t trouble yourself to fret about me. I can manage my own affairs without troubling other folks.”

“ Bless me ! ” said Mr. Deane, judiciously introducing a new idea, “ why, now I come to think of it, somebody said Wakem was going to send *his* son—the deformed lad—to a clergyman, didn’t they, Susan ? ” (appealing to his wife).

“ I can give no account of it, I’m sure,” said Mrs. Deane, closing her lips very tightly again. Mrs. Deane was not a woman to take part in a scene where missiles were flying.

“ Well,” said Mr. Tulliver, speaking all the more cheerfully, that Mrs. Glegg might see he didn’t mind her, “ if Wakem thinks o’ sending his son to a clergyman, depend on it I shall make no mistake i’ sending Tom to one. Wakem’s as big a scoundrel as Old Harry ever made, but he knows the length of every

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man's foot he's got to deal with. Ay, ay, tell me who's Wakem's butcher, and I'll tell you where to get your meat."

"But lawyer Wakem's son's got a hump-back," said Mrs. Pullet, who felt as if the whole business had a funereal aspect; "it's more nat'ral to send *him* to a clergyman."

"Yes," said Mr. Glegg, interpreting Mrs. Pullet's observation with erroneous plausibility, "you must consider that, neighbour Tulliver; Wakem's son isn't likely to follow any business. Wakem 'ull make a gentleman of him, poor fellow."

"Mr. Glegg," said Mrs. G., in a tone which implied that her indignation would fizz and ooze a little, though she was determined to keep it corked up, "you'd far better hold your tongue. Mr. Tulliver doesn't want to know your opinion nor mine neither. There's folks in the world as know better than everybody else."

"Why, I should think that's you, if we're to trust your own tale," said Mr. Tulliver, beginning to boil up again.

"Oh, *I* say nothing," said Mrs. Glegg sarcastically. "My advice has never been asked, and I don't give it."

"It'll be the first time, then," said Mr. Tulliver. "It's the only thing you're over-ready at giving."

"I've been over-ready at lending, then, if I haven't been over-ready at giving," said Mrs. Glegg. "There's folks I've lent money to as perhaps I shall repent o' lending money to kin."

"Come, come, come," said Mr. Glegg, soothingly. But Mr. Tulliver was not to be hindered of his retort.

"You've got a bond for it, I reckon," he said; "and you've had your five per cent, kin or no kin."

"Sister," said Mrs. Tulliver, pleadingly, "drink your wine, and let me give you some almonds and raisins."

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"Bessy, I'm sorry for you," said Mrs. Glegg, very much with the feeling of a cur that seizes the opportunity of diverting his bark towards the man who carries no stick. "It's poor work, talking o' almonds and raisins."

"Lors, sister Glegg, don't be so quarrelsome," said Mrs. Pullet, beginning to cry a little. "You may be struck with a fit, getting so red in the face after dinner, and we are but just out o' mourning, all of us—and all wi' gowns craped alike and just put by—it's very bad among sisters."

"I should think it is bad," said Mrs. Glegg. "Things are come to a fine pass when one sister invites the other to her house o' purpose to quarrel with her and abuse her."

"Softly, softly, Jane—be reasonable—be reasonable," said Mr. Glegg.

But while he was speaking, Mr. Tulliver, who had by no means said enough to satisfy his anger, burst out again.

"Who wants to quarrel with you?" he said. "It's you as can't let people alone, but must be gnawing at 'em for ever. I should never want to quarrel with any woman if she kept her place."

"My place, indeed!" said Mrs. Glegg, getting rather more shrill. "There's your betters, Mr. Tulliver, as are dead and in their grave, treated me with a different sort o' respect to what you do—*though* I've got a husband as'll sit by and see me abused by them as 'ud never ha' had the chance if there hadn't been them in our family as married worse than they might ha' done."

"If you talk o' that," said Mr. Tulliver, "my family's as good as yours—and better, for it hasn't got a damned ill-tempered woman in it."

"Well!" said Mrs. Glegg, rising from her chair, "I don't know whether you think it's a fine thing to

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sit by and hear me swore at, Mr. Glegg ; but I'm not going to stay a minute longer in this house. You can stay behind, and come home with the gig—and I'll walk home."

"Dear heart, dear heart !" said Mr. Glegg in a melancholy tone as he followed his wife out of the room.

"Mr. Tulliver, how could you talk so ? " said Mrs. Tulliver, with the tears in her eyes.

"Let her go," said Mr. Tulliver, too hot to be damped by any amount of tears. "Let her go, and the sooner the better : she won't be trying to domineer over *me* again in a hurry."

"Sister Pullet," said Mrs. Tulliver, helplessly, "do you think it 'ud be any use for you to go after her and try to pacify her ? "

"Better not, better not," said Mr. Deane. "You'll make it up another day."

"Then, sisters, shall we go and look at the children ? " said Mrs. Tulliver, drying her eyes.

GEORGE ELIOT

## TENNYSON AT FARRINGFORD

How familiar to us has become the description of the life at Farringford ! The regularity and the method of it all ; the settled habits becoming, as it were, the etiquette of the house, an etiquette, in later years, almost regal in its rigidity. The honoured but apprehensive guest arriving before sunset in a cab from Yarmouth pier ; the momentary glimpse of the poet over the hedge mowing the lawn in spectacles and black sombrero, and hiding, as one approached, behind the juniper ; the parlour-maid and the very late Gothic of the drawing-room window ; the evening sun upon the cedar outside ; the mask of Dante

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glimmering from the dark red walls and the engraving of Sebastiano del Piombo's Lazarus above the mantelpiece ; Mrs. Tennyson rising, gentle and nervous, towards one from the sofa, in her grey gown ; the anxious, expectant pause ; the sense of unbearable imminence—and then, slowly framed in the doorway, the dark bulk of the Laureate. In an awful silence he would advance into the room, a book held close to his, by then, unspectacled eyes. An evanescent introduction from Mrs. Tennyson, and those fierce eyes would be turned upon one in a penetrating myopic scrutiny, and a deep growl of acknowledgment, if not of greeting, would proceed from the mass of tangled mane and beard. Another aching pause, and in a crisis of embarrassment one would pass into the dining-room. It was six-thirty by the clock there ; how long could all this be possibly expected to last ? There was salt beef and carrots and side dishes on the table. The Laureate would begin to carve. A little fluttering conversation about Yarmouth pier from Mrs. Tennyson ; a second sudden growl from the Laureate : " I like my meat in wedges," and the subject of Yarmouth pier would flutter down to another prolonged and awful silence. And then gradually, in the appropriate and vacant expectancy thus created, the Laureate would embark with grunt and growl upon some broad Lincolnshire story, a story so broad and so North Country that one would wonder tremulously how much one understood, how much, with Mrs. Tennyson there, one could rightly be expected to understand ; and with the conclusion would come from the Laureate a loud appropriate guffaw, in contrast to which one's own accordant laughter appeared but a slight and timorous cacchination. Gradually under hammer-blows like this the ice would melt, and with the port a certain geniality, heartening but still very insecure, would descend upon the occasion. But there were

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worse trials to come. At eight one would be taken to the attic room for a pipe ; still apprehensive, one would enter, and from a basket the Laureate would choose a pipe and transfer it, already lighted, to one's lips. And then there would be a growl or two about some recent review in an obscure periodical ; and more stories ; and one would sit there in the smoke, wondering why he was so different from what one had expected—wondering why he called a novel “ a novéll,” why he pronounced knowledge with a long “ o,” why he gave to the word “ too ” a thinness of vowel sound which was cockney rather than Lincolnshire ; why he spoke of a pageant as a “ paygeant ” ; why, finally, he sat there, as Mr. Gosse has told us in his inimitably vivid way, “ a gaunt, black, tousled man, rough in speech, brooding like an old gipsy over his inch of clay pipe stuffed with shag and sucking in port wine with gusto.”

And then one would descend to the drawing-room, where the curtains had been drawn and the lamps lit ; and there was a table in the recessed window, with Mrs. Tennyson flickering over the tea-urn and the fruit. And more port. And then the reading would begin.

We have heard a great deal about this reading. It has been described very entertainingly by Mrs. Asquith ; it has inspired what is perhaps the best of many wonderful passages in Henry James' *Middle Years*. It figures prominently in all the endless references to these palpitating visits. He would sometimes read the *Idylls* ; more often he would choose the *Ode to the Duke of Wellington*, lengthening the vowels into :—  
“ Bury the greaaat Duke with an empire's lamentaaa-tion.”

Or into :—

“ To the nooise of the moourning of a mighty naaaation.”

## TENNYSON AT FARRINGFORD

Sometimes, and quite incomprehensibly, he would embark upon *The Northern Farmer*, and at other times he would startle his audience with a very metrical rendering of *The Battle of Brunanburh*. He would never consent to read *In Memoriam*: "I cannot," he said, "it breaks me down so." But it was *Maud* that was his favourite. "Come and let me read you *Maud*," he said to J. T. Fields; "you'll never forget it." On occasions, even, he would read German with a strong English accent.

But that he would read one something was a certainty:—

"and the poet, little urged,  
But with some prelude of disparagement  
Read, mouthing out his hollow oes and aes  
Deep-chested music."

And thus one would sit there in the red drawing-room, conscious, as Henry James says, "of the heaviest pressure" one "had doubtless ever known the romantic situations bring to bear," watching the large brown hand rippling to the movement of the verse, and from time to time clenched with whitening knuckles on the arm of the chair. And through it all the deep bucolic voice would continue, booming and chanting with sudden lifts and with disconcerting hisses and whispers, and, if one's attention wandered for a moment into thoughts of how exactly to phrase the situation in some eventual article or memoir, one would be suddenly pinioned and exposed by a break and a question: "How exactly do you understand that?"

The eventual comments, when all was over, were facilitated by the fact that Tennyson would generally make them himself. "There's a wonderful touch!" he would say. "That's very tender!" "How beautiful that is!" All that was expected of the audience during the recitation was their rapt atten-

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tion, and if, at the end, any comment was exacted, it was easy to evade the point by becoming "broken down." Take this, for instance, from Bayard Taylor :—

" I spoke of the *Idyll of Guinevere* as being perhaps his finest poem, and said that I could not read it aloud without my voice breaking down at certain passages. ' Why, I can read it and keep my voice ! ' he exclaimed triumphantly. This I doubted, and he agreed to try, after we went down to our wives. But the first thing he did was to produce a magnum of wonderful sherry. . . . We had two glasses apiece, when he said, ' To-night you shall help me to drink one of the few bottles of my Waterloo—1815.' The bottle was brought, and after another glass all round, Tennyson took up the *Idylls of the King*. His reading is a strange, monotonous chant, with unexpected falling inflexions, which I cannot describe, but can imitate exactly. It was very impressive. In spite of myself I became very much excited as he went on. Finally, when Arthur forgives the Queen, Tennyson's voice broke. I found tears on my cheeks, and Mr. and Mrs. Tennyson were crying, one on either side of me. He made an effort and went on to the end, closing grandly. ' How can you say,' I asked (referring to the previous conversations), ' that you have no surety of permanent fame ? This poem will only die with the language in which it is written.' Mrs. Tennyson started up from her couch. ' It is true ! ' she exclaimed ; ' I have told Alfred the same thing.' "

I have been informed that there exists somewhere, probably at Farringford, a gramophone record of Tennyson reciting *The Charge of the Light Brigade*. I have been unable to secure it. But it has been my privilege, on a very curious and decorative occasion,

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to edge Miss Ellen Terry into a corner of the Throne Room of Buckingham Palace and to insist, in return for a cup of coffee, on an exact imitation of the Laureate's recitation. The words, I said, did not matter : what I wanted was the tune. She was very gracious ; she boomed off at once into the trochaics of *Locksley Hall*, swaying increasingly upon the red settee to the motion of the verses, stamping finally with her little feet until the cup upset upon her dress. It was a black dress with sequins, and the situation, though interrupted, was redeemed.

And by then I knew exactly how Tennyson recited  
*Locksley Hall*. HAROLD NICOLSON

## JOHN BULL

An old song, made by an aged old pate,  
Of an old worshipful gentleman who had a great estate,  
That kept a brave old house at a bountiful rate,  
And an old porter to relieve the poor at his gate.

With an old study fill'd full of learned old books,  
With an old reverend chaplain, you might know him by his  
looks,  
With an old buttery-hatch worn quite off the hooks,  
And an old kitchen that maintained half-a-dozen old cooks.  
" Like an old courtier," etc.

OLD SONG

THERE is no species of humour in which the English more excel, than that which consists in caricaturing and giving ludicrous appellations, or nicknames. In this way they have whimsically designated, not merely individuals, but nations ; and, in their fondness for pushing a joke, they have not spared even themselves. One would think that, in personifying itself, a nation would be apt to picture something grand, heroic, and imposing ; but it is characteristic of the peculiar humour of the English, and of their love for what is

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blunt, comic, and familiar, that they have embodied their national oddities in the figure of a sturdy, corpulent old fellow, with a three-cornered hat, red waistcoat, leather breeches, and stout oaken cudgel. Thus they have taken a singular delight in exhibiting their most private foibles in a laughable point of view ; and have been so successful in their delineations, that there is scarcely a being in actual existence more absolutely present to the public mind than that eccentric personage, John Bull.

Perhaps the continual contemplation of the character thus drawn of them has contributed to fix it upon the nation ; and thus to give reality to what at first may have been painted in a great measure from the imagination. Men are apt to acquire peculiarities that are continually ascribed to them. The common orders of English seem wonderfully captivated with the *beau idéal* which they have formed of John Bull, and endeavour to act up to the broad caricature that is perpetually before their eyes. Unluckily, they sometimes make their boasted Bull-ism an apology for their prejudice or grossness ; and this I have especially noticed among those truly homebred and genuine sons of the soil who have never migrated beyond the sound of Bow bells. If one of these should be a little uncouth in speech, and apt to utter impertinent truths, he confesses that he is a real John Bull, and always speaks his mind. If he now and then flies into an unreasonable burst of passion about trifles, he observes, that John Bull is a choleric old blade, but then his passion is over in a moment, and he bears no malice. If he betrays a coarseness of taste, and an insensibility to foreign refinements, he thanks Heaven for his ignorance—he is a plain John Bull, and has no relish for frippery and nicknacks. His very proneness to be gulled by strangers, and to pay extravagantly for absurdities, is excused under

## JOHN BULL

the plea of munificence—for John is always more generous than wise.

Thus, under the name of John Bull, he will contrive to argue every fault into a merit, and will frankly convict himself of being the honestest fellow in existence.

However little, therefore, the character may have suited in the first instance, it has gradually adapted itself to the nation, or rather they have adapted themselves to each other ; and a stranger who wishes to study English peculiarities, may gather much valuable information from the innumerable portraits of John Bull, as exhibited in the windows of the caricature-shops. Still, however, he is one of those fertile humorists, that are continually throwing out new portraits, and presenting different aspects from different points of view ; and, often as he has been described, I cannot resist the temptation to give a slight sketch of him, such as he has met my eye.

John Bull, to all appearance, is a plain, downright, matter-of-fact fellow, with much less of poetry about him than rich prose. There is little of romance in his nature, but a vast deal of strong natural feeling. He excels in humour more than in wit ; is jolly rather than gay ; melancholy rather than morose ; can easily be moved to a sudden tear, or surprised into a broad laugh ; but he loathes sentiment, and has no turn for light pleasantry. He is a boon companion, if you allow him to have his humour, and to talk about himself ; and he will stand by a friend in a quarrel, with life and purse, however soundly he may be cudgelled.

In this last respect, to tell the truth, he has a propensity to be somewhat too ready. He is a busy-minded personage, who thinks not merely for himself and family, but for all the country round, and is most generously disposed to be everybody's champion.

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He is continually volunteering his services to settle his neighbour's affairs, and takes it in great dudgeon if they engage in any matter of consequence without asking his advice ; though he seldom engages in any friendly office of the kind without finishing by getting into a squabble with all parties, and then railing bitterly at their ingratitude. He unluckily took lessons in his youth in the noble science of defence, and having accomplished himself in the use of his limbs and his weapons, and become a perfect master at boxing and cudgel-play, he has had a troublesome life of it ever since. He cannot hear of a quarrel between the most distant of his neighbours, but he begins incontinently to fumble with the head of his cudgel, and consider whether his interest or honour does not require that he should meddle in the broil. Indeed, he has extended his relations of pride and policy so completely over the whole country, that no event can take place without infringing some of his finely-spun rights and dignities. Couched in his little domain, with these filaments stretching forth in every direction, he is like some choleric, bottle-bellied old spider, who has woven his web over a whole chamber, so that a fly cannot buzz, nor a breeze blow, without startling his repose, and causing him to sally forth wrathfully from his den.

Though really a good-hearted, good-tempered old fellow at bottom, yet he is singularly fond of being in the midst of contention. It is one of his peculiarities, however, that he only relishes the beginning of an affray ; he always goes into a fight with alacrity, but comes out of it grumbling even when victorious ; and though no one fights with more obstinacy to carry a contested point, yet, when the battle is over, and he comes to the reconciliation, he is so much taken up with the mere shaking of hands, that he is apt to let his antagonist pocket all that they have been quarrel-

## JOHN BULL

ling about. It is not, therefore, fighting that he ought so much to be on his guard against, as making friends. It is difficult to cudgel him out of a farthing ; but put him in a good humour, and you may bargain him out of all the money in his pocket. He is like a stout ship, which will weather the roughest storm uninjured, but roll its masts overboard in the succeeding calm.

He is a little fond of playing the magnifico abroad ; of pulling out a long purse ; flinging his money bravely about at boxing matches, horse races, cock fights, and carrying a high head among " gentlemen of the fancy " ; but immediately after one of these fits of extravagance, he will be taken with violent qualms of economy ; stop short at the most trivial expenditure ; talk desperately of being ruined and brought upon the parish ; and, in such moods, will not pay the smallest tradesman's bill, without violent altercation. He is in fact the most punctual and discontented paymaster in the world ; drawing his coin out of his breeches pocket with infinite reluctance ; paying to the uttermost farthing, but accompanying every guinea with a growl.

With all his talk of economy, however, he is a bountiful provider, and a hospitable housekeeper. His economy is of a whimsical kind, its chief object being to devise how he may afford to be extravagant ; for he will begrudge himself a beefsteak and pint of port one day, that he may roast an ox whole, broach a hogshead of ale, and treat all his neighbours on the next.

His domestic establishment is enormously expensive : not so much from any great outward parade, as from the great consumption of solid beef and pudding ; the vast number of followers he feeds and clothes ; and his singular disposition to pay hugely for small services. He is a most kind and indulgent master,

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and, provided his servants humour his peculiarities, flatter his vanity a little now and then, and do not peculate grossly on him before his face, they may manage him to perfection. Everything that lives on him seems to thrive and grow fat. His house-servants are well paid, and pampered, and have little to do. His horses are sleek and lazy, and prance slowly before his state carriage ; and his house-dogs sleep quietly about the door, and will hardly bark at a house-breaker.

His family mansion is an old castellated manor-house, grey with age, and of a most venerable, though weather-beaten appearance. It has been built upon no regular plan, but is a vast accumulation of parts, erected in various tastes and ages. The centre bears evident traces of Saxon architecture, and is as solid as ponderous stone and old English oak can make it. Like all the relics of that style, it is full of obscure passages, intricate mazes, and dusky chambers ; and though these have been partially lighted up in modern days, yet there are many places where you must still grope in the dark. Additions have been made to the original edifice from time to time, and great alterations have taken place ; towers and battlements have been erected during wars and tumults ; wings built in time of peace ; and outhouses, lodges, and offices, run up according to the whim or convenience of different generations, until it has become one of the most spacious, rambling tenements imaginable. An entire wing is taken up with the family chapel ; a reverend pile, that must once have been exceedingly sumptuous, and, indeed, in spite of having been altered and simplified at various periods, has still a look of solemn religious pomp. Its walls within are storied with the monuments of John's ancestors ; and it is snugly fitted up with soft cushions and well-lined chairs, where such of his family as are inclined to

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church services, may doze comfortably in the discharge of their duties.

To keep up this chapel has cost John much money ; but he is staunch in his religion, and piqued in his zeal, from the circumstance that many dissenting chapels have been erected in his vicinity, and several of his neighbours, with whom he has had quarrels, are strong papists.

To do the duties of the chapel he maintains, at a large expense, a pious and portly family chaplain. He is a most learned and decorous personage, and a truly well-bred Christian, who always backs the old gentleman in his opinions, winks discreetly at his little peccadilloes, rebukes the children when refractory, and is of great use in exhorting the tenants to read their Bibles, say their prayers, and, above all, to pay their rents punctually, and without grumbling.

The family apartments are in a very antiquated taste, somewhat heavy, and often inconvenient, but full of the solemn magnificence of former times ; fitted up with rich, though faded tapestry, unwieldy furniture, and loads of massy gorgeous old plate. The vast fireplaces, ample kitchens, extensive cellars, and sumptuous banqueting-halls—all speak of the roaring hospitality of days of yore, of which the modern festivity at the manor-house is but a shadow. There are, however, complete suites of rooms apparently deserted and time-worn ; and towers and turrets that are tottering to decay ; so that in high winds there is danger of their tumbling about the ears of the household.

- John has frequently been advised to have the old edifice thoroughly overhauled ; and to have some of the useless parts pulled down, and the others strengthened with their materials ; but the old gentleman always grows testy on this subject. He swears the house is an excellent house—that it is tight and

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weather-proof, and not to be shaken by tempests—that it has stood for several hundred years, and, therefore, is not likely to tumble down now—that as to its being inconvenient, his family is accustomed to the inconveniences, and would not be comfortable without them—that as to its unwieldy size and irregular construction, these result from its being the growth of centuries, and being improved by the wisdom of every generation—that an old family, like his, requires a large house to dwell in ; new, upstart families may live in modern cottages and snug boxes ; but an old English family should inhabit an old English manor-house. If you point out any part of the building as superfluous, he insists that it is material to the strength or decoration of the rest, and the harmony of the whole ; and swears that the parts are so built into each other, that if you pull down one, you run the risk of having the whole about your ears.

The secret of the matter is, that John has a great disposition to protect and patronise. He thinks it indispensable to the dignity of an ancient and honourable family, to be bounteous in its appointments, and to be eaten up by dependants ; and so, partly from pride and partly from kind-heartedness, he makes it a rule always to give shelter and maintenance to his superannuated servants.

The consequence is, that, like many other venerable family establishments, his manor is encumbered by old retainers whom he cannot turn off, and an old style which he cannot lay down. His mansion is like a great hospital of invalids, and, with all its magnitude, is not a whit too large for its inhabitants. Not a nook, or corner but is of use in housing some useless personage. Groups of veteran beef-eaters, gouty pensioners, and retired heroes of the buttery and the larder, are seen lolling about its walls, crawling over its lawns, dozing under its trees, or sunning themselves

upon the benches at its doors. Every office and out-house is garrisoned by these supernumeraries and their families ; for they are amazingly prolific, and when they die off, are sure to leave John a legacy of hungry mouths to be provided for. A mattock cannot be struck against the most mouldering tumble-down tower, but out pops, from some cranny or loophole, the gray pate of some superannuated hanger-on, who has lived at John's expense all his life, and makes the most grievous outcry at their pulling down the roof from over the head of a worn-out servant of the family. This is an appeal that John's honest heart never can withstand ; so that a man, who has faithfully eaten his beef and pudding all his life, is sure to be rewarded with a pipe and tankard in his old days.

A great part of his park, also, is turned into paddocks, where his broken-down chargers are turned loose to graze undisturbed for the remainder of their existence—a worthy example of grateful recollection, which if some of his neighbours were to imitate, would not be to their discredit. Indeed, it is one of his great pleasures to point out these old steeds to his visitors, to dwell on their good qualities, extol their past services, and boast, with some little vainglory, of the perilous adventures and hardy exploits through which they have carried him.

He is given, however, to indulge his veneration for family usages, and family encumbrances, to a whimsical extent. His manor is infested by gangs of gipsies ; yet he will not suffer them to be driven off, because they have infested the place time out of mind, and been regular poachers upon every generation of the family. He will scarcely permit a dry branch to be lopped from the great trees that surround the house, lest it should molest the rooks, that have bred there for centuries. Owls have taken possession of the dovecote ; but they are hereditary owls, and must

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not be disturbed. Swallows have nearly choked up every chimney with their nests ; martins build in every frieze and cornice ; crows flutter about the towers, and perch on every weathercock ; and old gray-headed rats may be seen in every quarter of the house, running in and out of their holes undauntedly in broad daylight. In short, John has such a reverence for everything that has been long in the family, that he will not hear even of abuses being reformed, because they are good old family abuses.

All these whims and habits have concurred woe-fully to drain the old gentleman's purse ; and as he prides himself on punctuality in money matters, and wishes to maintain his credit in the neighbourhood, they have caused him great perplexity in meeting his engagements. This, too, has been increased, by the altercations and heart-burnings which are continually taking place in his family. His children have been brought up to different callings, and are of different ways of thinking ; and as they have always been allowed to speak their minds freely, they do not fail to exercise the privilege most clamorously in the present posture of his affairs. Some stand up for the honour of the race, and are clear that the old establishment should be kept up in all its state, whatever may be the cost ; others, who are more prudent and considerate, entreat the old gentleman to retrench his expenses, and to put his whole system of house-keeping on a more moderate footing. He has, indeed, at times, seemed inclined to listen to their opinions, but their wholesome advice has been completely defeated by the obstreperous conduct of one of his sons. This is a noisy, rattle-pated fellow, of rather low habits, who neglects his business to frequent ale-houses—is the orator of village clubs, and a complete oracle among the poorest of his father's tenants. No sooner does he hear any of his brothers mention

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reform or retrenchment, than up he jumps, takes the words out of their mouths, and roars out for an overturn. When his tongue is once going nothing can stop it. He rants about the room ; hectors the old man about his spendthrift practices ; ridicules his tastes and pursuits ; insists that he shall turn the old servants out of doors ; give the broken-down horses to the hounds ; send the fat chaplain packing, and take a field-preacher in his place—nay, that the whole family mansion shall be levelled with the ground, and a plain one of brick and mortar built in its place. He rails at every social entertainment and family festivity, and skulks away growling to the ale-house whenever an equipage drives up to the door. Though constantly complaining of the emptiness of his purse, yet he scruples not to spend all his pocket-money in these tavern convocations, and even runs up scores for the liquor over which he preaches about his father's extravagance.

It may be readily imagined how little such thwarting agrees with the old cavalier's fiery temperament. He has become so irritable, from repeated crossings, that the mere mention of retrenchment or reform is a signal for a brawl between him and the tavern oracle. As the latter is too sturdy and refractory for paternal discipline, having grown out of all fear of the cudgel, they have frequent scenes of wordy warfare, which at times run so high, that John is fain to call in the aid of his son Tom, an officer who has served abroad, but is at present living at home, on half-pay. This last is sure to stand by the old gentleman, right or wrong ; likes nothing so much as a racketing, roistering life ; and is ready at a wink or nod, to out sabre, and flourish it over the orator's head, if he dares to array himself against paternal authority.

These family dissensions, as usual, have got abroad, and are rare food for scandal in John's neighbourhood.

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

People begin to look wise, and shake their heads, whenever his affairs are mentioned. They all "hope that matters are not so bad with him as represented ; but when a man's own children begin to rail at his extravagance, things must be badly managed. They understand he is mortgaged over head and ears, and is continually dabbling with money-lenders. He is certainly an open-handed old gentleman, but they fear he has lived too fast ; indeed, they never knew any good come of this fondness for hunting, racing, revelling, and prize-fighting. In short, Mr. Bull's estate is a very fine one, and has been in the family a long while ; but, for all that, they have known many finer estates come to the hammer."

What is worst of all, is the effect which these pecuniary embarrassments and domestic feuds have had on the poor man himself. Instead of that jolly round corporation, and smug rosy face, which he used to present, he has of late become as shrivelled and shrunk as a frost-bitten apple. His scarlet gold-laced waistcoat, which bellied out so bravely in those prosperous days when he sailed before the wind, now hangs loosely about him like a mainsail in a calm. His leather breeches are all in folds and wrinkles ; and apparently have much ado to hold up the boots that yawn on both sides of his once sturdy legs.

Instead of strutting about, as formerly, with his three-cornered hat on one side ; flourishing his cudgel, and bringing it down every moment with a hearty thump upon the ground ; looking everyone sturdily in the face, and trolling out a stave of a catch or a drinking song ; he now goes about whistling thoughtfully to himself, with his head drooping down, his cudgel tucked under his arm, and his hands thrust to the bottom of his breeches pockets, which are evidently empty.

Such is the plight of honest John Bull at present ;

## JOHN BULL

yet for all this the old fellow's spirit is as tall and as gallant as ever. If you drop the least expression of sympathy or concern, he takes fire in an instant ; swears that he is the richest and stoutest fellow in the country ; talks of laying out large sums to adorn his house or buy another estate ; and with a valiant swagger and grasping of his cudgel, longs exceedingly to have another bout at quarter-staff.

Though there may be something rather whimsical in all this, yet I confess I cannot look upon John's situation without strong feelings of interest. With all his odd humours and obstinate prejudices, he is a sterling-hearted old blade. He may not be so wonderfully fine a fellow as he thinks himself, but he is at least twice as good as his neighbours represent him. His virtues are all his own ; all plain, home-bred, and unaffected. ( His very faults smack of the raciness of his good qualities. His extravagance savours of his generosity ; his quarrelsomeness of his courage ; his credulity of his open faith ; his vanity of his pride ; and his bluntness of his sincerity.) They are all the redundancies of a rich and liberal character. He is like his own oak ; rough without, but sound and solid within ; whose bark abounds with excrescences in proportion to the growth and grandeur of the timber ; and whose branches make a fearful groaning and murmuring in the least storm, from their very magnitude and luxuriance. There is something, too, in the appearance of his old family mansion that is extremely poetical and picturesque ; and, as long as it can be rendered comfortably habitable, I should almost tremble to see it meddled with during the present conflict of tastes and opinions. Some of his advisers are no doubt good architects that might be of service ; but many, I fear, are mere levellers, who, when they had once got to work with their mattocks on this venerable edifice, would never stop until they

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had brought it to the ground, and perhaps buried themselves among the ruins. All that I wish is, that John's present troubles may teach him more prudence in future. That he may cease to distress his mind about other people's affairs ; that he may give up the fruitless attempt to promote the good of his neighbours, and the peace and happiness of the world, by dint of the cudgel ; that he may remain quietly at home ; gradually get his house into repair ; cultivate his rich estate according to his fancy ; husband his income—if he thinks proper ; bring his unruly children into order—if he can ; renew the jovial scenes of ancient prosperity ; and long enjoy, on his paternal lands, a green, an honourable, and a merry old age.

WASHINGTON IRVING

## THE BUSINESS MAN

IT is not easy for the slave of "copy," sedentary and shy, to know that triumphant figure of the active, bustling world, the business man. The business man is too busy, and can only be seen in office hours, when the scribe is correcting proofs or, perhaps, not yet up. Nevertheless, I once nearly saw the Governor of the Bank of England. I hold the Governor to be the archetype of the business man. In my green unknowing youth I used to take the gentleman in cocked hat and picturesque robe at the Threadneedle Street entrance for the Governor, but now know better. Well, I once nearly saw the Governor. It was on the stage. Sir Gerald du Maurier was in the bank-parlour when a servant entered and said : "The Governor of the Bank of England to call on you, sir." "Show him in," said Sir Gerald with the easy nonchalance of which only actors have the secret. It was a tremendous moment. I seemed to hear harps

## THE BUSINESS MAN

in the air. And just then, down came the curtain! It was felt, no doubt, that the Governor of the Bank of England ought not to be made a motley to the view. But I was inconsolable. I had been robbed of my one chance of seeing the supreme business man.

Of late, however, the veil that shrouds the business man from the non-business eye has been partly lifted. The pictorial advertisement people have got hold of him and give brief, tantalising glimpses of his daily life. Maeterlinck speaks of "*l'auguste vie quotidienne*" of Hamlet. That only shows that Hamlet (it is indeed his prime characteristic) was not a business man. For the business man's daily life, if the advertisements are to be trusted, is not so much august as alert, strenuous, and, above all, devoted to the pleasures of the toilet. And his toilet seems, for the most part, to centre in or near his chin. Indeed, it is by his chin that you identify the business man. You know what Pascal said of Cleopatra's nose: how, if it had been an inch shorter, the whole history of the world would have been different. Much the same thing may be said about the business man's chin. Had it been receding or pointed or dimpled or double, there would have been no business man and consequently no business. But things, as Bishop Butler said, are what they are and their consequences will be what they will be. The business man's chin is prominent, square, firm, and (unless he deals in rubber tyres—the sole exception to the rule) smooth. It is as smooth as Spedding's forehead, celebrated by Thackeray and Edward Fitzgerald. It is, indeed, like that forehead, a kind of landmark, a public monument. Even the rich, velvety lather, which does not dry on the face and leaves behind a feeling of complete comfort and well-grooming, cannot disguise it. No wonder the business man is so particular about shaving it! It is a kind of religious rite, an Early Matins, with him.

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

Outside the bank-parlour, the mart, and the exchange the business man takes no risks, and at his toilet-table he prefers safety razors. Indeed, he collects them. Sometimes he favours the sort that can be stropped in a moment with one turn of the wrist ; sometimes the sort that needs no stropping at all. But, like all collectors, he is never so happy as when handling, or rather caressing, the objects of his collection. Mark how his eyes dance with delight and his smile sweetens as the razor courses over his chin. Evidently life at this moment is burning for him with a hard gem-like flame. Call it not shaving ! Say, rather, he is ministering to the symbolic element in him, daintily smoothing the proud emblem of his power—to which he will add the finishing touch of pearl-powder, whose constant use produces a delicate bloom, tones up the complexion, and protects the skin against the ravages of time.

When the chin has been prepared for the business day he tries and contrasts the several effects of it over a variety of collars. For the business man collects collars, too. His chin protrudes with quiet but firm insistence over some of them, nestles coyly in others, or it may be emerges with ease from the sort designed to give ample throat room and especially favoured by men who seek considerable freedom but at the same time a collar of character and distinction. Nor has he any false shame about being seen in his shirt-sleeves. In fact, he seems to be in the habit, when half dressed, of calling in his friends (evidently, from their chins, fellow business men) to see how perfectly his shirt fits at the neck and how its thoroughly shrunk material is none the worse for repeated visits to the laundry.

Once dressed—and I pass over his interviews with his tailor (he collects overcoats), because that would lead us far and might land us, unawares, among

## THE BUSINESS MAN

sportsmen, or airmen, or other non-business men—once dressed, he is to be seen at his office. That does not mean that he is to be seen at work. No, it is a somewhat sinister fact that the advertisements hardly ever show the business man engaged in business. You may find him at an enormous desk bristling with patent devices and honeycombed with pigeon-holes, where he sees himself invested with perfect control and rid of all petty routine anomalies, with a mind free to consider questions of policy and the higher aspirations of his house. But not, in blunt English, working, oh dear no! He is pleasantly gossiping with another business man, who is lolling over the edge of the desk smoking a cigarette. Now and then, it is true, you may get a glimpse of him at the telephone. But then his tender smile gives him away. It is obviously no business conversation but an appointment for lunch with his fiancée.

Only one advertisement artist has ever "spotted" him at work. He was addressing the board. The board all wore white waistcoats, the same business chin, and the same dry smile as the orator, who with clenched fist and flashing eye assured them of his conviction that increased production results from the bond of mutual goodwill created between employer and employee by the board's system of life assurance. Altogether a very jolly party. But outside the world of business men it wouldn't be considered work. Really, for work it looks as though you would have to go to the non-business man. Think of Balzac's eighteen hours a day!

But the business man, I dare say, will reply, as they said to the sonneteer in Molière, that "*Le temps ne fait rien à l'affaire.*" Certainly, the business man's time doesn't—for you next find him, in spick and span evening dress, at the dinner-table, beaming at the waiter who has brought him his favourite sauce. The

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

business man collects sauces, but prefers the sauce that goes with everything. After dinner you may see him, before a roaring fire, holding up his glass of port to the light and telling another business man who the shipper is. Last scene of all, a night-piece, you have a glimpse of him in his pyjamas merrily discoursing with several other business men (in different patterns of the same unshrinkable fabric) all sitting cross-legged and smoking enormous cigars. This is the end of a perfect business day. And you conclude that business men sleep in dormitories.

A. B. WALKLEY

## OCCASIONS

~~Dr. Parthvi Nath Kaul,~~

~~F.Sc. Student,~~

~~S.P. College,~~

~~Srinagar,~~

~~Kashmir.~~

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## THE TWO MATCHES

ONE day there was a traveller in the woods in California, in the dry season, when the Trades were blowing strong. He had ridden a long way, and he was tired and hungry, and dismounted from his horse to smoke a pipe. But when he felt in his pocket he found but two matches. He struck the first, and it would not light.

"Here is a pretty state of things!" said the traveller. "Dying for a smoke; only one match left; and that certain to miss fire! Was there ever a creature so unfortunate? And yet," thought the traveller, "suppose I light this match, and smoke my pipe, and shake out the dottle here in the grass—the grass might catch on fire, for it is dry like tinder; and while I snatch out the flames in front, they might evade and run behind me, and seize upon yon bush of poison oak; before I could reach it, that would have blazed up; over the bush I see a pine tree hung with moss; that too would fly in fire upon the instant to its topmost bough; and the flame of that long torch—how would the trade wind take and brandish that through the inflammable forest! I hear this dell roar in a moment with the joint voice of wind and fire, I see myself gallop for my soul, and the flying conflagration chase and outflank me through the hills; I see this pleasant forest burn for days, and the cattle roasted, and the springs dried up, and the farmer ruined, and his children cast upon the world. What a world hangs upon this moment!"

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

With that he struck the match, and it missed fire.

"Thank God!" said the traveller, and put his pipe in his pocket.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

### THE KING'S ENCORE

*Such a king never reigns*  
I AM told that in a German concert or opera they hardly ever encore a song; that though they may be dying to hear it again, their good breeding usually preserves them against requiring the repetition.

Kings may encore; that is quite another matter; it delights everybody to see that the King is pleased; and as to the actor encored, his pride and gratification are simply boundless. Still, there are circumstances in which even a royal encore—

But it is better to illustrate. The King of Bavaria is a poet, and has a poet's eccentricities—with the advantage over all other poets of being able to gratify them, no matter what form they may take. He is fond of the opera, but not fond of sitting in the presence of an audience; therefore, it has sometimes occurred, in Munich, that when an opera has been concluded and the players were getting off their paint and finery, a command has come to them to get their paint and finery on again. Presently the King would arrive, solitary and alone, and the players would begin at the beginning and do the entire opera over again with only that one individual in the vast solemn theatre for audience. Once he took an odd freak into his head. High up and out of sight, over the prodigious stage of the court theatre is a maze of interlacing water-pipes, so pierced that, in case of fire, innumerable little thread-like streams of water can be caused to descend; and in case of need this discharge can be augmented to a pouring flood. American managers might make a note of that. The King

## THE KING'S ENCORE

was sole audience. The opera proceeded, it was a piece with a storm in it ; the mimic thunder began to mutter, the mimic wind began to wail and sough, and the mimic rain to patter. The King's interest rose higher and higher : it developed into enthusiasm. He cried out—

“ It is good, very good indeed ! But I will have real rain ! turn on the water ! ”

The manager pleaded for a reversal of the command ; said it would ruin the costly scenery and the splendid costumes, but the King cried—

“ No matter, no matter, I will have real rain ! Turn on the water ! ”

So the real rain was turned on and began to descend in gossamer lances to the mimic flower-beds and gravel-walks of the stage. The richly dressed actresses and actors tripped about singing bravely and pretending not to mind it. The King was delighted—his enthusiasm grew higher. He cried out—

“ Bravo, bravo ! More thunder ! more lightning ! turn on more rain ! ”

The thunder boomed, the lightning glared, the storm-winds raged, the deluge poured down. The mimic royalty on the stage, with their soaked satins clinging to their bodies, slopped around ankle-deep in water, warbling their sweetest and best, the fiddlers under the eaves of the stage sawed away for dear life, with the cold overflow spouting down the backs of their necks, and the dry and happy King sat in his lofty box and wore his gloves to ribbons applauding.

“ More yet ! ” cried the King ; “ more yet—let loose all the thunder, turn on all the water ! I will hang the man that raises an umbrella ! ”

When this most tremendous and effective storm that had ever been produced in any theatre was at last over, the King's approbation was measureless. He cried—

“ Magnificent, magnificent ! *Encore !* Do it again ! ”

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

But the manager succeeded in persuading him to recall the encore, and said the company would feel sufficiently rewarded and complimented in the mere fact that the encore was desired by his Majesty, without fatiguing him with a repetition to gratify their own vanity.

During the remainder of the act the lucky performers were those whose parts required changes of dress ; the others were a soaked, bedraggled, and uncomfortable lot, but in the last degree picturesque. The stage scenery was ruined, trap-doors were so swollen that they wouldn't work for a week afterwards, the fine costumes were spoiled, and no end of minor damages were done by that remarkable storm.

It was a royal idea—that storm—and royally carried out. But observe the moderation of the King : he did not insist upon his encore. If he had been a gladsome, unreflecting American opera-audience he probably would have had his storm repeated and repeated until he drowned all those people. MARK TWAIN

## DINNER AT DOCTOR BLIMBER'S

DOCTOR BLIMBER was already in his place in the dining-room, at the top of the table, with Miss Blimber and Mrs. Blimber on either side of him. Mr. Feeder in a black coat was at the bottom. Paul's chair was next to Miss Blimber ; but it being found, when he sat in it, that his eyebrows were not much above the level of the table-cloth, some books were brought in from the Doctor's study, on which he was elevated, and on which he always sat from that time—carrying them in and out himself on after occasions, like a little elephant and castle.

Grace having been said by the Doctor, dinner began. There was some nice soup ; also roast meat,

## DINNER AT DOCTOR BLIMBER'S

boiled meat, vegetables, pie, and cheese. Every young gentleman had a massive silver fork, and a napkin ; and all the arrangements were stately and handsome. In particular, there was a butler in a blue coat and bright buttons, who gave quite a winey flavour to the table beer ; he poured it out so superbly.

Nobody spoke, unless spoken to, except Doctor Blimber, Mrs. Blimber, and Miss Blimber, who conversed occasionally. Whenever a young gentleman was not actually engaged with his knife and fork or spoon, his eye, with an irresistible attraction, sought the eye of Doctor Blimber, Mrs. Blimber, or Miss Blimber, and modestly rested there. Toots appeared to be the only exception to this rule. He sat next Mr. Feeder on Paul's side of the table, and frequently looked behind and before the intervening boys to catch a glimpse of Paul.

Only once during dinner was there any conversation that included the young gentlemen. It happened at the epoch of the cheese, when the Doctor, having taken a glass of port wine, and hemmed twice or thrice, said :

"It is remarkable, Mr. Feeder, that the Romans——"

At the mention of this terrible people, their implacable enemies, every young gentleman fastened his gaze upon the Doctor, with an assumption of the deepest interest. One of the number who happened to be drinking, and who caught the Doctor's eye glaring at him through the side of his tumbler, left off so hastily that he was convulsed for some moments, and in the sequel ruined Doctor Blimber's point.

"It is remarkable, Mr. Feeder," said the Doctor, beginning again slowly, "that the Romans, in those gorgeous and profuse entertainments of which we read in the days of the Emperors, when luxury had attained a height unknown before or since, and when whole

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

provinces were ravaged to supply the splendid means of one Imperial Banquet——”

Here the offender, who had been swelling and straining, and waiting in vain for a full stop, broke out violently.

“Johnson,” said Mr. Feeder, in a low reproachful voice, “take some water.”

The Doctor, looking very stern, made a pause until the water was brought, and then resumed :

“And when, Mr. Feeder——”

But Mr. Feeder, who saw that Johnson must break out again, and who knew that the Doctor would never come to a period before the young gentlemen until he had finished all he meant to say, couldn't keep his eye off Johnson ; and thus was caught in the fact of not looking at the Doctor, who consequently stopped.

“I beg your pardon, Sir,” said Mr. Feeder, reddening. “I beg your pardon, Doctor Blimber.”

“And when,” said the Doctor, raising his voice, “when, Sir, as we read, and have no reason to doubt—incredible as it may appear to the vulgar of our time—the brother of Vitellius prepared for him a feast, in which were served, of fish, two thousand dishes——”

“Take some water, Johnson—dishes, Sir,” said Mr. Feeder.

“Of various sorts of fowl, five thousand dishes.”

“Or try a crust of bread,” said Mr. Feeder.

“And one dish,” pursued Doctor Blimber, raising his voice still higher as he looked all round the table, “called, from its enormous dimensions, the Shield of Minerva, and made, among other costly ingredients, of the brains of pheasants——”

“Ow, ow, ow ! ” (from Johnson).

“Woodcocks——”

“Ow, ow, ow ! ”

## DINNER AT DOCTOR BLIMBER'S

"The sounds of the fish called scari——"

"You'll burst some vessel in your head," said Mr. Feeder. "You had better let it come."

"And the spawn of the lamprey, brought from the Carpathian Sea," pursued the Doctor in his severest voice; "when we read of costly entertainments such as these, and still remember that we have a Titus——"

"What would be your mother's feelings if you died of apoplexy!" said Mr. Feeder.

"A Domitian——"

"And you're blue, you know," said Mr. Feeder.

"A Nero, a Tiberius, a Caligula, a Heliogabalus, and many more," pursued the Doctor; "it is, Mr. Feeder—if you are doing me the honour to attend—remarkable: VERY—remarkable, Sir——"

But Johnson, unable to suppress it any longer, burst at that moment into such an overwhelming fit of coughing, that although both his immediate neighbours thumped him on the back, and Mr. Feeder himself held a glass of water to his lips, and the butler walked him up and down several times between his own chair and the sideboard, like a sentry, it was full five minutes before he was moderately composed, and then there was a profound silence.

"Gentlemen," said Doctor Blimber, "rise for Grace! Cornelia, lift Dombey down"—nothing of whom but his scalp was accordingly seen above the table-cloth. "Johnson will repeat to me to-morrow morning before breakfast, without book, and from the Greek Testament, the first chapter of the Epistle of Saint Paul to the Ephesians. We will resume our studies, Mr. Feeder, in half-an-hour."

*Mr. Matthew Nathaniel*

CHARLES DICKENS

*B. A. Student,*

*S. P. College,*

*Srinagar, 63*

*Kashmir*

THE BUILDING OF THE ALBERT  
MEMORIAL

WORDS and books may be ambiguous memorials ; but who can misinterpret the visible solidity of bronze and stone ? At Frogmore, near Windsor, where her mother was buried, Victoria constructed, at the cost of £200,000, a vast and elaborate mausoleum for herself and her husband. But that was a private and domestic monument, and the Queen desired that wherever her subjects might be gathered together they should be reminded of the Prince. Her desire was gratified ; all over the country—at Aberdeen, at Perth, and at Wolverhampton—statues of the Prince were erected ; and the Queen, making an exception to her rule of retirement, unveiled them herself. Nor did the capital lag behind. A month after the Prince's death a meeting was called together at the Mansion House to discuss schemes for honouring his memory. Opinions, however, were divided upon the subject. Was a statue or an institution to be preferred ? Meanwhile a subscription was opened ; an influential committee was appointed, and the Queen was consulted as to her wishes in the matter. Her Majesty replied that she would prefer a granite obelisk, with sculptures at the base, to an institution. But the committee hesitated : an obelisk, to be worthy of the name, must clearly be a monolith ; and where was the quarry in England capable of furnishing a granite block of the required size ? It was true that there was granite in Russian Finland ; but the committee were advised that it was not adapted to resist exposure to the open air. On the whole, therefore, they suggested that a Memorial Hall should be erected, together with a statue of the Prince. Her Majesty assented ; but then another difficulty arose. It was found that not more

## THE BUILDING OF THE ALBERT MEMORIAL

than £60,000 had been subscribed—a sum insufficient to defray the double expense. The Hall, therefore, was abandoned ; a statue alone was to be erected ; and certain eminent architects were asked to prepare designs. Eventually the committee had at their disposal a total sum of £120,000, since the public subscribed another £10,000, while £50,000 was voted by Parliament. Some years later a joint-stock company was formed and built, as a private speculation, the Albert Hall.

The architect whose design was selected, both by the committee and by the Queen, was Mr. Gilbert Scott, whose industry, conscientiousness, and genuine piety had brought him to the head of his profession. His lifelong zeal for the Gothic style having given him a special prominence, his handiwork was strikingly visible, not only in a multitude of original buildings, but in most of the cathedrals of England. Protests, indeed, were occasionally raised against his renovations ; but Mr. Scott replied with such vigour and unction in articles and pamphlets that not a Dean was unconvinced, and he was permitted to continue his labours without interruption. On one occasion, however, his devotion to Gothic had placed him in an unpleasant situation. The Government offices in Whitehall were to be rebuilt ; Mr. Scott competed, and his designs were successful. Naturally, they were in the Gothic style, combining “ a certain squareness and horizontality of outline ” with pillar-mullions, gables, high-pitched roofs, and dormers ; and the drawings, as Mr. Scott himself observed, “ were, perhaps, the best ever sent in to a competition, or nearly so.” After the usual difficulties and delays the work was at last to be put in hand, when there was a change of Government and Lord Palmerston became Prime Minister. Lord Palmerston at once sent for Mr. Scott. “ Well, Mr. Scott,” he said, in his jaunty way, “ I

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

can't have anything to do with this Gothic style. I must insist on your making a design in the Italian manner, which I am sure you can do very cleverly." Mr. Scott was appalled ; the style of the Italian Renaissance was not only unsightly, it was positively immoral, and he sternly refused to have anything to do with it. Thereupon Lord Palmerston assumed a fatherly tone. " Quite true ; a Gothic architect can't be expected to put up a Classical building ; I must find someone else." This was intolerable, and Mr. Scott, on his return home, addressed to the Prime Minister a strongly-worded letter, in which he dwelt upon his position as an architect, upon his having won two European competitions, his being an A.R.A., a gold medallist of the Institute, and a lecturer on architecture at the Royal Academy ; but it was useless—Lord Palmerston did not even reply. It then occurred to Mr. Scott that, by a judicious mixture, he might, while preserving the essential character of the Gothic, produce a design which would give a superficial impression of the Classical style. He did so, but no effect was produced upon Lord Palmerston. The new design, he said, was " neither one thing nor t'other—a regular mongrel affair—and he would have nothing to do with it either." After that Mr. Scott found it necessary to recruit for two months at Scarborough, " with a course of quinine." He recovered his tone at last, but only at the cost of his convictions. For the sake of his family he felt that it was his unfortunate duty to obey the Prime Minister ; and, shuddering with horror, he constructed the Government offices in a strictly Renaissance style.

Shortly afterwards Mr. Scott found some consolation in building the St. Pancras Hotel in a style of his own.

And now another and yet more satisfactory task was his. " My idea in designing the Memorial," he wrote,

## THE BUILDING OF THE ALBERT MEMORIAL

“ was to erect a kind of ciborium to protect a statue of the Prince ; and its special characteristic was that the ciborium was designed in some degree on the principles of the ancient shrines. These shrines were models of imaginary buildings, such as had never in reality been erected ; and my idea was to realise one of these imaginary structures with its precious materials, its inlaying, its enamels, &c. &c.” His idea was particularly appropriate since it chanced that a similar conception, though in the reverse order of magnitude, had occurred to the Prince himself, who had designed and executed several silver cruet-stands upon the same model. At the Queen’s request a site was chosen in Kensington Gardens as near as possible to that of the Great Exhibition, and in May 1864 the first sod was turned. The work was long, complicated, and difficult ; a great number of workmen were employed, besides several subsidiary sculptors and metal-workers under Mr. Scott’s direction, while at every stage sketches and models were submitted to her Majesty, who criticised all the details with minute care, and constantly suggested improvements. The frieze, which encircled the base of the monument, was in itself a very serious piece of work. “ This,” said Mr. Scott, “ taken as a whole, is perhaps one of the most laborious works of sculpture ever undertaken, consisting, as it does, of a continuous range of figure-sculpture of the most elaborate description, in the highest *alto-relievo* of life-size, of more than 200 feet in length, containing about 170 figures, and executed in the hardest marble which could be procured.” After three years of toil the memorial was still far from completion, and Mr. Scott thought it advisable to give a dinner to the workmen, “ as a substantial recognition of his appreciation of their skill and energy.” “ Two long tables,” we are told, “ constructed of scaffold planks, were arranged in the workshops, and covered

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

with newspapers, for want of table-cloths. Upwards of eighty men sat down. Beef and mutton, plum-pudding and cheese, were supplied in abundance, and each man who desired it had three pints of beer, gingerbeer and lemonade being provided for the teetotalers, who formed a very considerable proportion. . . . Several toasts were given and many of the workmen spoke, almost all of them commencing by 'Thanking God that they enjoyed good health'; some alluded to the temperance that prevailed amongst them, others observed how little swearing was ever heard, whilst all said how pleased and proud they were to be engaged on so great a work."

Gradually the edifice approached completion. The one hundred and seventieth life-size figure in the frieze was chiselled, the granite pillars arose, the mosaics were inserted in the allegorical pediments, the four colossal statues representing the greater Christian virtues, the four other colossal statues representing the greater moral virtues, were hoisted into their positions, the eight bronzes representing the greater sciences—Astronomy, Chemistry, Geology, Geometry, Rhetoric, Medicine, Philosophy, and Physiology—were fixed on their glittering pinnacles, high in air. The statue of Physiology was particularly admired. "On her left arm," the official description informs us, "she bears a new-born infant, as a representation of the development of the highest and most perfect of physiological forms; her hand points towards a microscope, the instrument which lends its assistance for the investigation of the minuter forms of animal and vegetable organisms." At last the gilded cross crowned the dwindling galaxies of superimposed angels, the four continents in white marble stood at the four corners of the base, and, seven years after its inception, in July 1872, the monument was thrown open to the public.

But four more years were to elapse before the central

## A FAMILY ARGUMENT

figure was ready to be placed under its starry canopy. It was designed by Mr. Foley, though in one particular the sculptor's freedom was restricted by Mr. Scott. "I have chosen the sitting posture," Mr. Scott said, "as best conveying the idea of dignity befitting a royal personage." Mr. Foley ably carried out the conception of his principal. "In the attitude and expression," he said, "the aim has been, with the individuality of portraiture, to embody rank, character, and enlightenment, and to convey a sense of that responsive intelligence indicating an active, rather than a passive, interest in those pursuits of civilisation illustrated in the surrounding figures, groups, and relievos. . . . To identify the figure with one of the most memorable undertakings of the public life of the Prince—the International Exhibition of 1851—a catalogue of the works collected in that first gathering of the industry of all nations is placed in the right hand." The statue was of bronze gilt and weighed nearly ten tons. It was rightly supposed that the simple word "Albert," cast on the base, would be a sufficient means of identification.

LYTTON STRACHEY—

*A father though externally indifferent towards  
family has yet a deep affection for the*

A FAMILY ARGUMENT

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife.

However little known the feelings or views of such a man may be on his first entering a neighbourhood, this truth is so well fixed in the minds of the surrounding families that he is considered as the rightful property of some one or other of their daughters.

"My dear Mr. Bennet," said his lady to him one day, "have you heard that Netherfield Park is let at last?"

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

Mr. Bennet replied that he had not.

“ But it is,” returned she ; “ for Mrs. Long has just been here, and she told me all about it.”

Mr. Bennet made no answer.

“ Do not you want to know who has taken it ? ” cried his wife impatiently.

“ *You* want to tell me, and I have no objection to hearing it.”

This was invitation enough.

“ Why, my dear, you must know, Mrs. Long says that Netherfield is taken by a young man of large fortune from the north of England ; that he came down on Monday in a chaise and four to see the place, and was so much delighted with it that he agreed with Mr. Morris immediately ; that he is to take possession before Michaelmas, and some of his servants are to be in the house by the end of next week.”

“ What is his name ? ”

“ Bingley.”

“ Is he married or single ? ”

“ Oh ! single, my dear, to be sure ! A single man of large fortune ; four or five thousand a-year. What a fine thing for our girls ! ”

“ How so ? how can it affect them ? ”

“ My dear Mr. Bennet,” replied his wife, “ how can you be so tiresome ! you must know that I am thinking of his marrying one of them.”

“ Is that his design in settling here ? ”

“ Design ! nonsense, how can you talk so ! But it is very likely that he *may* fall in love with one of them, and therefore you must visit him as soon as he comes.”

“ I see no occasion for that. You and the girls may go, or you may send them by themselves, which perhaps will be still better, for as you are as handsome as any of them, Mr. Bingley might like you the best of the party.”

“ My dear, you flatter me. I certainly *have* had my

## A FAMILY ARGUMENT

share of beauty, but I do not pretend to be anything extraordinary now. When a woman has five grown-up daughters she ought to give over thinking of her own beauty."

"In such cases a woman has not often much beauty to think of."

"But, my dear, you must indeed go and see Mr. Bingley when he comes into the neighbourhood."

"It is more than I engage for, I assure you."

"But consider your daughters. Only think what an establishment it would be for one of them. Sir William and Lady Lucas are determined to go, merely on that account, for in general, you know, they visit no new-comers. Indeed, you must go, for it will be impossible for *us* to visit him if you do not."

"You are over-scrupulous, surely. I dare say Mr. Bingley will be very glad to see you; and I will send a few lines by you to assure him of my hearty consent to his marrying whichever he chooses of the girls: though I must throw in a good word for my little Lizzy."

"I desire you will do no such thing. Lizzy is not a bit better than the others; and I am sure she is not half so handsome as Jane, nor half so good-humoured as Lydia. But you are always giving *her* the preference."

"They have none of them much to recommend them," replied he; "they are all silly and ignorant, like other girls; but Lizzy has something more of quickness than her sisters."

"Mr. Bennet, how can you abuse your own children in such a way! You take delight in vexing me. You have no compassion on my poor nerves."

"You mistake me, my dear. I have a high respect for your nerves. They are my old friends. I have heard you mention them with consideration these twenty years at least."

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

“ Ah ! you do not know what I suffer.”

“ But I hope you will get over it, and live to see many young men of four thousand a-year come into the neighbourhood.”

“ It will be no use to us if twenty such should come, since you will not visit them.”

“ Depend upon it, my dear, that when there are twenty, I will visit them all.”

Mr. Bennet was so odd a mixture of quick parts, sarcastic humour, reserve, and caprice, that the experience of three-and-twenty years had been insufficient to make his wife understand his character. *Her* mind was less difficult to develope. She was a woman of mean understanding, little information, and uncertain temper. When she was discontented she fancied herself nervous. The business of her life was to get her daughters married ; its solace was visiting and news.

Mr. Bennet was among the earliest of those who waited on Mr. Bingley. He had always intended to visit him, though to the last always assuring his wife that he should not go ; and till the evening after the visit was paid she had no knowledge of it. It was then disclosed in the following manner : Observing his second daughter employed in trimming a hat, he suddenly addressed her with :—

“ I hope Mr. Bingley will like it, Lizzy.”

“ We are not in a way to know *what* Mr. Bingley likes,” said her mother resentfully, “ since we are not to visit.”

“ But you forget, mamma,” said Elizabeth, “ that we shall meet him at the assemblies, and that Mrs. Long has promised to introduce him.”

“ I do not believe Mrs. Long will do any such thing. She has two nieces of her own. She is a selfish, hypocritical woman, and I have no opinion of her.”

“ No more have I,” said Mr. Bennet ; “ and I am glad to find that you do not depend on her serving you.”

## A FAMILY ARGUMENT

Mrs. Bennet deigned not to make any reply, but, unable to contain herself, began scolding one of her daughters.

"Don't keep coughing so, Kitty, for Heaven's sake! Have a little compassion on my nerves. You tear them to pieces."

"Kitty has no discretion in her coughs," said her father; "she times them ill."

"I do not cough for my own amusement," replied Kitty fretfully. "When is your next ball to be, Lizzy?"

"To-morrow fortnight."

"Aye, so it is," cried her mother, "and Mrs. Long does not come back till the day before; so it will be impossible for her to introduce him, for she will not know him herself."

"Then, my dear, you may have the advantage of your friend, and introduce Mr. Bingley to *her*."

"Impossible, Mr. Bennet, impossible, when I am not acquainted with him myself; how can you be so teasing?"

"I honour your circumspection. A fortnight's acquaintance is certainly very little. One cannot know what a man really is by the end of a fortnight. But if *we* do not venture somebody else will; and after all, Mrs. Long and her nieces must stand their chance; and, therefore, as she will think it an act of kindness, if you decline the office, I will take it on myself."

The girls stared at their father. Mrs. Bennet said only, "Nonsense, nonsense!"

"What can be the meaning of that emphatic exclamation?" cried he. "Do you consider the forms of introduction, and the stress that is laid on them, as nonsense? I cannot quite agree with you *there*. What say you, Mary? for you are a young lady of deep reflection, I know, and read great books and make extracts."

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Mary wished to say something very sensible, but knew not how.

“ While Mary is adjusting her ideas,” he continued, “ let us return to Mr. Bingley.”

“ I am sick of Mr. Bingley,” cried his wife.

“ I am sorry to hear *that* ; but why did not you tell me so before ? If I had known as much this morning I certainly would not have called on him. It is very unlucky ; but as I have actually paid the visit, we cannot escape the acquaintance now.”

The astonishment of the ladies was just what he wished ; that of Mrs. Bennet perhaps surpassing the rest ; though, when the first tumult of joy was over, she began to declare that it was what she had expected all the while.

“ How good it was in you, my dear Mr. Bennet ! But I knew I should persuade you at last. I was sure you loved your girls too well to neglect such an acquaintance. Well, how pleased I am ! and it is such a good joke, too, that you should have gone this morning and never said a word about it till now.”

“ Now, Kitty, you may cough as much as you choose,” said Mr. Bennet ; and, as he spoke, he left the room, fatigued with the raptures of his wife.

“ What an excellent father you have, girls ! ” said she, when the door was shut. “ I do not know how you will ever make him amends for his kindness ; or me either, for that matter. At our time of life it is not so pleasant, I can tell you, to be making new acquaintance every day ; but for your sakes we would do anything. Lydia, my love, though you *are* the youngest, I dare say Mr. Bingley will dance with you at the next ball.”

“ Oh ! ” said Lydia stoutly, “ I am not afraid ; for though I *am* the youngest, I’m the tallest.”

The rest of the evening was spent in conjecturing

## JUBILEE DAY

how soon he would return Mr. Bennet's visit, and determining when they should ask him to dinner.

JANE AUSTEN

## JUBILEE DAY

JUBILEE DAY. Sweltering heat, after a gray beginning ; baked streets. Irving, out of his wealth and generosity, had bought a block of seats in the Mall for the procession, and there the family sat. Papa, mamma, Vicky, and Charles and their daughter Imogen (their other children were away at school), Rome, Stanley, Irving and his wife, and Una and Ted up from the country with two stout and handsome children. The ladies wore beflowered, rakish, fly-away hats, and dresses with high collars and hunched sleeves and small waists. They look absurd now, in old pictures of the period, but they did not look absurd to one another at the time ; they looked natural, and *comme-il-faut*, and smart. The boys wore their Eton suits, and the girls light frocks. Imogen had a blue smock, gathered across the yoke, so that when she ran her fingers across the smocking it made a little soft, crisp noise. She sat next her little cousins from the country. But she was shy of them and turned her face away, and would say nothing to them after she had asked, "How is Rover ? How is Lassie ? Are the puppies born yet ?" Fits of shyness seized upon Imogen like toothache, even now that she had been ever so long at school, and she would hang her head and mutter monosyllabic answers, and wish she were Prince Prigio, with his cap of darkness, and when, in church, it came to the psalm about "Deliver me from the hands of strange children," she would pray it ardently, feeling how right David (if that psalm were one of his) had been. She was not shy of her

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cousins when she stayed at the farm with them, for the farm was like paradise, full of calves, puppies, pigs, and joy, and Katie, Dick, Martin, and Dolly were its hierophants, and, though they weren't much good at being pirates or Red Indians, it was, no doubt, because they were always employed to better purpose. But in the Mall, seated in a tidy row waiting for the procession, it was different. Imogen wished that two of her brothers and sisters could have been there, instead of Katie and Dick. She held a fold of her mother's soft foulard dress tightly between her hot fingers. She whispered.

"Mother. Suppose someone felt sick and couldn't get out?"

"*Jean*—you don't feel sick, do you, child?" Vicky was alarmed, knowing the weakness of her daughter's stomach.

"Oh, no, *I* don't feel sick. But if someone did? What *would* they do, mother? Suppose the lady just above *you* felt sick, mother? Suppose she *was* sick? What would you do, mother?"

"Don't be silly, Imogen. If you talk like that you'll feel sick yourself. Talk to Katie. Don't you see you're interrupting grandmamma and me?"

But Imogen's grandmamma smiled across at her small, pink, freckled face.

"Are you enjoying yourself, Jennie?"

"Yes, grandmamma. . . . Is the Queen older than you, grandmamma?"

"Yes. The Queen is seventy-eight. I am sixty-three. When I was only three years old the Queen was crowned."

"Did you see her crowned?"

"No. I was too young."

"Is it a very big crown? Will she have it on? . . . *Mother*"—Imogen had a terrible thought and whispered it—"suppose *the Queen* was sick, in her

## JUBILEE DAY

carriage, just opposite here? What *would* happen, mother? Would the procession wait or go on?"

"Now, Jennie, that will do. You're being tiresome and silly. Talk to Katie and Dick. I'm talking to grandmamma; I told you before."

(For that was the way in which children were kept under in the last century. Things have changed.)

Gold and purple and crimson. Silver and scarlet and gold. Fluttering pennons on tall Venetian masts. The Mall was a street in fairyland, or the New Jerusalem. And thronged with those who would never see either more nearly, being neither fantastic nor good. Never would most of these enter through the strait gate and see the gates of pearl and the city of golden streets. But was not this as good? Silver and violet and crimson and gold; gay streamers flying on the wind. Beautiful as an army with banners the Mall was. . . .

"Let's count the flags," said Imogen to Katie and Dick.

"I remember the coronation," said Mr. Garden, half to Irving, half to anyone sitting about who might be interested, after the way of elderly persons. "I was a very small boy, but my father took me to see the procession. I remember he put me up on his shoulder while it passed. . . . There wasn't quite such a crowd then as to-day, I think."

"People have increased," said Rome. "Particularly in London. There are now too many, that is certain."

"The crowd," said Mr. Garden, his memory straying over that day sixty years ago, "was *prettier* then. I am nearly sure it was prettier. Costumes were better."

"They could hardly," said Rome, "have been worse."

"I remember my mother, in a violet pelisse, that I

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think she had got new for the occasion, and a crinoline. . . . Crinolines hadn't grown large in '37—they were very graceful, I think . . . and a pretty poke bonnet. And my father in a cravat, with close whiskers (whiskers hadn't grown large either) and a tall gray hat. . . . And myself done up tight in blue nankeen with brass buttons, and your aunt Selina with white frilled garments showing below her frock. Little girls weren't so pretty," he added, looking across at Imogen's straight blue smock. "Well, well, sixty years ago. A great deal has happened since then. A great reign and a great time."

"They're pretty nearly due now," said Irving, consulting his watch. "Sure to be late, though."

"Who'll come first, mother?" Imogen asked.

"Captain Ames, on a horse. And behind him Life Guards and dragoons and that kind of person. . . . So I said to her, mamma, that really unless she could undertake to . . . Oh, listen, they really *are* coming now. Listen to the cheering, Jennie."

The noise of loyalty beat and broke like a sea from west to east. The sound shivered down Imogen's spine like music, and, as usual in such moments, her eyes pringled with hot tears, which she squeezed away. Then came the blaring of the trumpets and the rolling of the drums, and, singing high above them like a kettle on the boil, the faint, keen skirling of the pipes.

Imogen's hot hand clutched Vicky's dress.

"Now, Jean, don't get too excited, darling. Try to be quiet and sensible, like Katie and Dick."

"Mother, I *am* too excited already. *Look*, mother—is that Captain Ames on a horse?"

Captain Ames on a horse (and what a horse!) it was. And behind him Life Guards, dragoons, lancers, and that kind of person, in noble profusion. Very gallant and proud and lovely, prancing, curveting,

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gay as bright flowers in a wind. . . . Oh, God, what military men !

A little white-moustached general rode by and great cheers crashed. "That's Lord Roberts, Imogen." Imogen, who knew her Kipling, had a lump in her throat for Bobs of Kandahar.

"And that's Lord Charles Beresford—with the cocked hat, do you see ? "

Then came the great guns, running on their carriages.

And then the cheering broke to a mighty storm, as it always does when sailors go by.

The sailors, too, had guns. Bluejackets and smart, neat officers, Britannia's pets, Britannia's pride. . . .

Imogen, who had always meant to be a sailor, and who even now blindly hoped that somehow, before she reached the age for Osborne, a way would be made for her (either she would become a boy, or dress up as a boy, or the rule excluding girls from the senior service would be relaxed) gasped and screwed her hands tightly together against her palpitating breast. Here were sailors. Straight from the tossing blue sea ; straight from pacing the quarter-deck, spy-glass in hand, spying for enemy craft, climbing the rigging, setting her hard-a-port, manning the guns, raking the enemy amidships, holding up slavers, receiving surrendered swords. . . . Here, in brief, were sailors ; and the junior service faded from the stage. Rule, Britannia, Britannia rules the waves. The moment was almost too excessive for a budding sailor, with wet eyes and lips pressed tight together to keep the face steady. Fortunately it passed, and was succeeded by the First Prussian Dragoon Guards, great men with golden helmets, who could be admired without passion, and by stange, brown men with turbans and big beards.

"Indians," Vicky said, and Indians, too, one knew

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from Kipling. And, "Sir Purtab Singh," added the informing voice.

"Is he the chief of the Indians, mother?"

"Some kind of chief, yes."

Other brown men followed the Indians—little, coppery, fuzzy Maoris; and with them rode splendid white men from New Zealand, and slouch-hatted Rhodesian horse.

"From South Africa. . . . You remember Dr. Jim and his raid, and Cecil Rhodes . . . the Christmas holidays before last . . ."

"When the chair broke and I cut my head." Yes, Imogen remembered, though she had been only seven then. Over the Transvaal border, then a gallop for life or death. . . . The chair was still broken. . . . Everyone seemed to remember Dr. Jim and his raid and Cecil Rhodes, for the slouch-hatted riders were cheered and cheered. Hurrah for South Africa! "Political trouble, much less war, cannot now be apprehended," *The Times* had said that morning, in a paean of Jubilee satisfaction with sixty years of progress abroad and at home.

The best was over, for now began carriages—landaus and pairs. Foreign envoys. The Papal Nuncio sharing a landau with a gentleman from China, who cooled himself with a painted fan. Landau after landau bearing royal gentlemen, royal ladies. What a pity for them to be borne tamely in landaus instead of a-horseback!

A Colonial escort; an Indian escort; Lord Wolseley.

And then the procession's meaning and climax. "The Queen, Jennie."

Eight cream horses soberly drawing an open carriage, surrounded by postilions and red-coated running footmen; and in the carriage the little stout old lady, black-dressed, with black and white bonnet, and with

## JUBILEE DAY

her the beautiful Princess in heliotrope, dressed in the then current fashion, which royal ladies have adhered to ever since, never allowing themselves to be unsettled by the modes of the new century.

The Queen, God save her. The noise was monstrous, louder than any real noise could be.

"Dear old soul," cried Vicky's clear voice as she lustily clapped white kid hands.

Papa's blue eyes looked kindly down on the old lady whose coronation he remembered.

"A record to be proud of," said papa.

"Oh yes, she's seen some life these sixty years, the old lady," Irving admitted.

"I expect she's feeling the heat a bit," said Una.

"Well, I hope she's happy."

Behind them people were saying loyal Victorian things to one another about the dear old Queen.

"She's got the hearts of the Empire all right," they were saying, "whether they're under white skins or brown," and "God bless our dear Queen," and "How well she looks to-day," and "She's an Empress, but she's a woman first. That's why we all love her so," and so on and so forth.

And "There goes the Prince," they said, applauding now the burly middle-aged gentleman riding his horse by his mother's carriage.

"He must be gettin' pretty impatient, poor man," said Amy. "Nearly sixty himself, and mamma still going strong. I expect he thinks this ought to be his silver jubilee, not mamma's diamond one."

Mr. Garden looked pained. He often looked and was pained at the wife of Maurice.

Imogen's heart swelled for the Empress-Queen and the crash of loyalty, but not to bursting point; for here was only a little old lady in a carriage (though drawn by eight cream horses like a fairy godmother's), and it is the swagger of gallantry that stirs. Sailors,

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soldiers, explorers, martyrs, firemen, circus-riders, Blondin on his rope, Joan of Arc on her white steed or her red pile—these are they that shake the soul to tears. Not old ladies, however mighty, who have sat on a throne for sixty years.

“The Prince, Jennie. The Prince of Wales.”

“*Oh, mother, where?*”

The Prince of Wales. Gallant figure of legend. Young, noble, princely, with caracolling charger and a triple white plume in a silver helm. The bravest and the most chivalrous of the knights. Where was the Prince of Wales—“*Oh, mother, where?*”

“There—don’t you see him? The big man in uniform with a gray beard, riding by the Queen’s carriage.”

The big man. . . . Oh no, that must be a mistake.

“*That’s* not the Prince of Wales, mother. Not *that* one. . . .”

“Of course. Why shouldn’t it be?”

A thousand reasons why it shouldn’t be. A hundred thousand reasons. . . . But in vain their legions beat against the hard little fact that it *was*. Imogen’s soaring heart sank like a stone in water. Fearful doubts whispered. Had all the Princes of Wales been like that—fat, elderly men with gray beards? The Black Prince. . . . Oh no, not the Black Prince. . . .

“The Black Prince wasn’t like that, mother, was he?”

“It must be nearly the end now. Here’s the music. . . . What, Jean? What’s bothering you now?”

“The Black Prince . . .”

“Forget him, my precious. Don’t let any prince weigh on your little mind. Here comes the music. Do you hear the pipes, children?”

So the great procession passed eastward, to rejoice Trafalgar Square, the Strand, Fleet Street, and the lands across the river.

## VISITING AT CRANFORD

"It'll be a job getting out of this. Hold on to me, Imogen. Did you enjoy it, darling?"

"Yes." Imogen nodded, with the sun in her screwed-up eyes. "I wish we could run very fast down the streets to where they haven't passed yet, and see them all again. Do you think you could, mother?"

"I'm quite sure we couldn't . . . You're not over tired, mamma dear?"

"Oh no. I feel very well. . . . But that child has turned green . . ."

Vicky looked down, startled, at her daughter.

"Imogen. Aren't you well?"

"Mother, I think I may be going to be sick."

"Well, sit down till it's over. . . . Bless the child. It's the heat and the excitement. She gets taken like that sometimes, by way of reaction after her treats—most tiresome."

"Poor little mite."

"How are you feeling now, Jennie?"

Imogen said nothing. Yellow as cream cheese, she sat in her seat and asked God not to disgrace her by letting her be sick in public, in the grand stand, on Jubilee Day, with all London looking on.

But, "I'm not sure, mother, that I do very much believe in prayers," she said to Vicky that evening.

ROSE MACAULAY

## VISITING AT CRANFORD

ONE morning, as Miss Matty and I sat at our work—it was before twelve o'clock, and Miss Matty had not changed the cap with yellow ribbons that had been Miss Jenkyns' best, and which Miss Matty was now wearing out in private, putting on the one made in imitation of Mrs. Jamieson's at all times when she

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expected to be seen—Martha came up, and asked if Miss Betty Barker might speak to her mistress. Miss Matty assented, and quickly disappeared to change the yellow ribbons, while Miss Barker came upstairs ; but as she had forgotten her spectacles, and was rather flurried by the unusual time of the visit, I was not surprised to see her return with one cap on the top of the other. She was quite unconscious of it herself, and looked at us with bland satisfaction. Nor do I think Miss Barker perceived it ; for, putting aside the little circumstance that she was not so young as she had been, she was very much absorbed in her errand, which she delivered herself of with an oppressive modesty that found vent in endless apologies.

Miss Betty Barker was the daughter of the old clerk at Cranford who had officiated in Mr. Jenkyns' time. She and her sister had had pretty good situations as ladies' maids, and had saved money enough to set up a milliner's shop, which had been patronised by the ladies in the neighbourhood. Lady Arley, for instance, would occasionally give Miss Barkers the pattern of an old cap of hers, which they immediately copied and circulated among the *élite* of Cranford. I say the *élite*, for Miss Barkers had caught the trick of the place, and piqued themselves upon their " aristocratic connection." They would not sell their caps and ribbons to anyone without a pedigree. Many a farmer's wife or daughter turned away huffed from Miss Barkers' select millinery, and went rather to the universal shop, where the profits of brown soap and moist sugar enabled the proprietor to go straight to (Paris, he said, until he found his customers too patriotic and John Bullish to wear what the Mounseers wore) London, where, as he often told his customers, Queen Adelaide had appeared, only the very week before, in a cap exactly like the one he showed them, trimmed with yellow and blue ribbons, and had been complimented

## VISITING AT CRANFORD

by King William on the becoming nature of her head-dress.

Miss Barkers, who confined themselves to truth, and did not approve of miscellaneous customers, thrived notwithstanding. They were self-denying, good people. Many a time have I seen the eldest of them (she that had been maid to Mrs. Jamieson) carrying out some delicate mess to a poor person. They only aped their betters in having "nothing to do" with the class immediately below theirs. And when Miss Barker died, their profits and income were found to be such that Miss Betty was justified in shutting up shop and retiring from business. She also (as I think I have before said) set up her cow; a mark of respectability in Cranford almost as decided as setting up a gig is among some people. She dressed finer than any lady in Cranford; and we did not wonder at it; for it was understood that she was wearing out all the bonnets and caps and outrageous ribbons which had once formed her stock-in-trade. It was five or six years since she had given up shop, so in any other place than Cranford her dress might have been considered *passée*.

And now Miss Betty Barker had called to invite Miss Matty to tea at her house on the following Tuesday. She gave me also an impromptu invitation, as I happened to be a visitor—though I could see she had a little fear lest, since my father had gone to live in Drumble, he might have engaged in that "horrid cotton trade," and so dragged his family down out of "aristocratic society." She prefaced this invitation with so many apologies that she quite excited my curiosity. "Her presumption" was to be excused. What had she been doing? She seemed so overpowered by it, I could only think that she had been writing to Queen Adelaide to ask for a receipt for washing lace; but the act which she so charac-

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terised was only an invitation she had carried to her sister's former mistress, Mrs. Jamieson. "Her former occupation considered, could Miss Matty excuse the liberty?" Ah! thought I, she has found out that double cap, and is going to rectify Miss Matty's head-dress. No! it was simply to extend her invitation to Miss Matty and to me. Miss Matty bowed acceptance; and I wondered that, in the graceful action, she did not feel the unusual weight and extraordinary height of her head-dress. But I do not think she did, for she recovered her balance and went on talking to Miss Betty in a kind, condescending manner, very different from the fidgety way she would have had if she had suspected how singular her appearance was.

"Mrs. Jamieson is coming, I think you said?" asked Miss Matty.

"Yes. Mrs. Jamieson most kindly and condescendingly said she would be happy to come. One little stipulation she made, that she should bring Carlo. I told her that if I had a weakness, it was for dogs."

"And Miss Pole?" questioned Miss Matty, who was thinking of her pool at Preference, in which Carlo would not be available as a partner.

"I am going to ask Miss Pole. Of course, I could not think of asking her until I had asked you, madam—the rector's daughter, madam. Believe me, I do not forget the situation my father held under yours."

"And Mrs. Forrester, of course?"

"And Mrs. Forrester. I thought, in fact, of going to her before I went to Miss Pole. Although her circumstances are changed, madam, she was born a Tyrrell, and we can never forget her alliance to the Bigges, of Bigelow Hall."

Miss Matty cared much more for the little circumstance of her being a very good card-player.

"Mrs. Fitz-Adam—I suppose——"

"No, madam. I must draw a line somewhere."

## VISITING AT CRANFORD

Mrs. Jamieson would not, I think, like to meet Mrs. Fitz-Adam. I have the greatest respect for Mrs. Fitz-Adam—but I cannot think her fit society for such ladies as Mrs. Jamieson and Miss Matilda Jenkyns.”

Miss Betty Barker bowed low to Miss Matty and pursed up her mouth. She looked at me with sidelong dignity, as much as to say, although a retired milliner, she was no democrat, and understood the difference of ranks.

“May I beg you to come as near half-past six, to my little dwelling, as possible, Miss Matilda? Mrs. Jamieson dines at five, but has kindly promised not to delay her visit beyond that time—half-past six.” And with a swimming curtsy Miss Betty Barker took her leave.

My prophetic soul foretold a visit that afternoon from Miss Pole, who usually came to call on Miss Matilda after any event—or indeed in sight of any event—to talk it over with her.

“Miss Betty told me it was to be a choice and select few,” said Miss Pole, as she and Miss Matty compared notes.

“Yes, so she said. Not even Mrs. Fitz-Adam.”

Now Mrs. Fitz-Adam was the widowed sister of the Cranford surgeon, whom I have named before. Their parents were respectable farmers, content with their station. The name of these good people was Hoggins. Mr. Hoggins was the Cranford doctor now; we disliked the name and considered it coarse; but, as Miss Jenkyns said, if he changed it to Piggins it would not be much better. We had hoped to discover a relationship between him and that Marchioness of Exeter whose name was Molly Hoggins; but the man, careless of his own interests, utterly ignored and denied any such relationship, although, as dear Miss Jenkyns had said, he had a sister called Mary, and the same Christian names were very apt to run in families.

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

Soon after Miss Mary Hoggins married Mr. Fitz-Adam she disappeared from the neighbourhood for many years. She did not move in a sphere in Cranford society sufficiently high to make any of us care to know what Mr. Fitz-Adam was. He died and was gathered to his fathers without our ever having thought about him at all. And then Mrs. Fitz-Adam reappeared in Cranford ("as bold as a lion," Miss Pole said), a well-to-do widow, dressed in rustling black silk, so soon after her husband's death that poor Miss Jenkyns was justified in the remark she made, that "bombazine would have shown a deeper sense of her loss."

I remember the convocation of ladies who assembled to decide whether or not Mrs. Fitz-Adam should be called upon by the old blue-blooded inhabitants of Cranford. She had taken a large rambling house, which had been usually considered to confer a patent of gentility upon its tenant, because, once upon a time, seventy or eighty years before, the spinster daughter of an earl had resided in it. I am not sure if the inhabiting this house was not also believed to convey some unusual power of intellect; for the earl's daughter, Lady Jane, had a sister, Lady Anne, who had married a general officer in the time of the American war, and this general officer had written one or two comedies which were still acted on the London boards, and which, when we saw them advertised, made us all draw up and feel that Drury Lane was paying a very pretty compliment to Cranford. Still, it was not at all a settled thing that Mrs. Fitz-Adam was to be visited, when dear Miss Jenkyns died; and, with her, something of the clear knowledge of the strict code of gentility went out too. As Miss Pole observed, "As most of the ladies of good family in Cranford were elderly spinsters, or widows without children, if we did not relax a little, and become less

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exclusive, by-and-by we should have no society at all."

Mrs. Forrester continued on the same side.

"She had always understood that Fitz meant something aristocratic ; there was Fitz-Roy—she thought that some of the King's children had been called Fitz-Roy ; and there was Fitz-Clarence now—they were the children of dear good King William the Fourth. Fitz-Adam !—it was a pretty name, and she thought it very probably meant ' Child of Adam.' No one, who had not some good blood in their veins, would dare to be called Fitz ; there was a deal in a name—she had had a cousin who spelt his name with two little ff's—ffoulkes—and he always looked down upon capital letters, and said they belonged to lately-invented families. She had been afraid he would die a bachelor, he was so very choice. When he met with a Mrs. ffarrington, at a watering-place, he took to her immediately ; and a very pretty genteel woman she was—a widow, with a very good fortune ; and ' my cousin,' Mr. ffoulkes, married her ; and it was all owing to her two little ff's."

Mrs. Fitz-Adam did not stand a chance of meeting with a Mr. Fitz-anything in Cranford, so that could not have been her motive for settling there. Miss Matty thought it might have been the hope of being admitted in the society of the place, which would certainly be a very agreeable rise for *ci-devant* Miss Hoggins ; and if this had been her hope it would be cruel to disappoint her.

So everybody called upon Mrs. Fitz-Adam—everybody but Mrs. Jamieson, who used to show how honourable she was by never seeing Mrs. Fitz-Adam when they met at the Cranford parties. There would be only eight or ten ladies in the room, and Mrs. Fitz-Adam was the largest of all, and she invariably used to stand up when Mrs. Jamieson came in and

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curtsey very low to her whenever she turned in her direction—so low, in fact, that I think Mrs. Jamieson must have looked at the wall above her, for she never moved a muscle of her face, no more than if she had not seen her. Still Mrs. Fitz-Adam persevered.

The spring evenings were getting bright and long when three or four ladies in calashes met at Miss Barker's door. Do you know what a calash is? It is a covering worn over caps, not unlike the heads fastened on old-fashioned gigs; but sometimes it is not quite so large. This kind of head-gear always made an awful impression on the children in Cranford; and now two or three left off their play in the quiet sunny little street and gathered in wondering silence round Miss Pole, Miss Matty, and myself. We were silent, too, so that we could hear loud suppressed whispers inside Miss Barker's house: "Wait, Peggy! wait till I've run upstairs and washed my hands. When I cough, open the door; I'll not be a minute."

And true enough, it was not a minute before we heard a noise, between a sneeze and a crow; on which the door flew open. Behind it stood a round-eyed maiden, all aghast at the honourable company of calashes, who marched in without a word. She recovered presence of mind enough to usher us into a small room, which had been the shop but was now converted into a temporary dressing-room. There we unpinned and shook ourselves, and arranged our features before the glass into a sweet and gracious company-face; and, then, bowing backwards with "After you, ma'am," we allowed Mrs. Forrester to take precedence up the narrow staircase that led to Miss Barker's drawing-room. There she sat, as stately and composed as though we had never heard that odd-sounding cough, from which her throat must have been even then sore and rough. Kind, gentle, shabbily dressed Mrs. Forrester was immediately con-

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ducted to the second place of honour—a seat arranged something like Prince Albert's near the Queen's—good, but not so good. The place of pre-eminence was, of course, reserved for the Honourable Mrs. Jamieson, who presently came panting up the stairs—Carlo rushing round her on her progress, as if he meant to trip her up.

And now Miss Betty Barker was a proud and happy woman ! She stirred the fire, and shut the door, and sat as near to it as she could, quite on the edge of her chair. When Peggy came in, tottering under the weight of the tea-tray, I noticed that Miss Barker was sadly afraid lest Peggy should not keep her distance sufficiently. She and her mistress were on very familiar terms in their everyday intercourse, and Peggy wanted now to make several little confidences to her, which Miss Barker was on thorns to hear, but which she thought it her duty, as a lady, to repress. So she turned away from all Peggy's asides and signs ; but she made one or two very malapropos answers to what was said ; and at last, seized with a bright idea, she exclaimed “ Poor, sweet Carlo ! I'm forgetting him. Come down stairs with me, poor ittie doggie, and it shall have its tea, it shall ! ”

In a few minutes she returned, bland and benignant as before ; but I thought she had forgotten to give the “ poor ittie doggie ” anything to eat, judging by the avidity with which he swallowed down chance pieces of cake. The tea-tray was abundantly loaded—I was pleased to see it, I was so hungry ; but I was afraid the ladies present might think it vulgarly heaped up. I know they would have done at their own houses ; but somehow the heaps disappeared here. I saw Mrs. Jamieson eating seed-cake, slowly and considerately, as she did everything ; and I was rather surprised, for I knew she had told us, on the occasion of her last party, that she never had it in her

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house, it reminded her so much of scented soap. She always gave us Savoy biscuits. However, Mrs. Jamieson was kindly indulgent to Miss Barker's want of knowledge of the customs of high life ; and, to spare her feelings, ate three large pieces of seed-cake, with a placid, ruminating expression of countenance, not unlike a cow's.

After tea there was some little demur and difficulty. We were six in number ; four could play at Preference, and for the other two there was Cribbage. But all, except myself (I was rather afraid of the Cranford ladies at cards, for it was the most earnest and serious business they ever engaged in), were anxious to be of the " pool." Even Miss Barker, while declaring she did not know Spadille from Manille, was evidently hankering to take a hand. The dilemma was soon put to an end by a singular kind of noise. If a Baron's daughter-in-law could ever be supposed to snore I should have said Mrs. Jamieson did so then ; for, overcome by the heat of the room, and inclined to doze by nature, the temptation of that very comfortable arm-chair had been too much for her, and Mrs. Jamieson was nodding. Once or twice she opened her eyes with an effort, and calmly but unconsciously smiled upon us ; but by-and-by, even her benevolence was not equal to this exertion, and she was sound asleep.

" It is very gratifying to me," whispered Miss Barker at the card-table to her three opponents, whom, notwithstanding her ignorance of the game, she was " basting " most unmercifully—" very gratifying, indeed, to see how completely Mrs. Jamieson feels at home in my poor little dwelling ; she could not have paid me a greater compliment."

Miss Barker provided me with some literature in the shape of three or four handsomely bound fashion books ten or twelve years old, observing, as she put a

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little table and a candle for my special benefit, that she knew young people liked to look at pictures. Carlo lay and snorted and started at his mistress's feet. He, too, was quite at home.

The card-table was an animated scene to watch ; four ladies' heads, with niddle-noddling caps, all nearly meeting over the middle of the table in their eagerness to whisper quick enough and loud enough : and every now and then came Miss Barker's " Hush, ladies ! if you please, hush ! Mrs. Jamieson is asleep."

It was very difficult to steer clear between Mrs. Forrester's deafness and Mrs. Jamieson's sleepiness. But Miss Barker managed her arduous task well. She repeated the whisper to Mrs. Forrester, distorting her face considerably, in order to show, by the motions of her lips, what was said ; and then she smiled kindly all round at us, and murmured to herself, " Very gratifying, indeed ; I wish my poor sister had been alive to see this day."

Presently the door was thrown wide open ; Carlo started to his feet, with a loud snapping bark, and Mrs. Jamieson awoke : or, perhaps, she had not been asleep—as she said almost directly, the room had been so light she had been glad to keep her eyes shut, but had been listening with great interest to all our amusing and agreeable conversation. Peggy came in once more, red with importance. Another tray ! " Oh, gentility ! " thought I, " can you endure this last shock ? " For Miss Barker had ordered (nay, I doubt not, prepared, although she did say, " Why ! Peggy, what have you brought us ? " and looked pleasantly surprised at the unexpected pleasure) all sorts of good things for supper—scaloped oysters, potted lobsters, jelly, a dish called " little Cupids " (which was in great favour with the Cranford ladies, although too expensive to be given, except on solemn and state occasions—macaroons sopped in brandy, I should

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have called it, if I had not known its more refined and classical name). In short, we were evidently to be feasted with all that was sweetest and best ; and we thought it better to submit graciously, even at the cost of our gentility—which never ate suppers in general, but which, like most non-supper eaters, was particularly hungry on all special occasions.

Miss Barker, in her former sphere, had, I dare say, been made acquainted with the beverage they call cherry-brandy. We none of us had ever seen such a thing, and rather shrank back when she proffered it us—"just a little, leetle glass, ladies ; after the oysters and lobsters you know. Shell-fish are sometimes thought not very wholesome." We all shook our heads like female mandarins ; but at last, Mrs. Jamieson suffered herself to be persuaded, and we followed her lead. It was not exactly unpalatable, though so hot and so strong that we thought ourselves bound to give evidence that we were not accustomed to such things by coughing terribly—almost as strangely as Miss Barker had done before we were admitted by Peggy.

"It's very strong," said Miss Pole, as she put down her empty glass ; "I do believe there's spirit in it."

"Only a little drop—just necessary to make it keep," said Miss Barker. "You know we put brandy paper over preserves to make them keep. I often feel tipsy myself from eating damson tart."

I question whether damson tart would have opened Mrs. Jamieson's heart as the cherry-brandy did ; but she told us of a coming event, respecting which she had been quite silent till that moment.

"My sister-in-law, Lady Glenmire, is coming to stay with me."

There was a chorus of "Indeed !" and then a pause. Each one rapidly reviewed her wardrobe, as to its fitness to appear in the presence of a Baron's widow ; for, of course, a series of small festivals were

## A VILLAGE CELEBRATION

always held in Cranford on the arrival of a visitor at any of our friends' houses. We felt very pleasantly excited on the present occasion.

Not long after this the maids and the lanterns were announced. Mrs. Jamieson had the sedan chair, which had squeezed itself into Miss Barker's narrow lobby with some difficulty, and most literally "stopped the way." It required some skilful manœuvring on the part of the old chairmen (shoemakers by day, but when summoned to carry the sedan dressed up in a strange old livery—long great coats, with small capes, coeval with the sedan, and similar to the dress of the class in Hogarth's pictures) to edge, and back, and try at it again, and finally to succeed in carrying their burden out of Miss Barker's front door. Then we heard their quick pit-a-pat along the quiet little street as we put on our calashes and pinned up our gowns; Miss Barker hovering about us with offers of help, which, if she had not remembered her former occupation, and wished us to forget it, would have been much more pressing.

MRS. GASKELL

## A VILLAGE CELEBRATION

ALTHOUGH our village is a very small one, we had fifteen men serving in the Forces before the war was over. Fortunately, as the Vicar well said, "we were wonderfully blessed in that none of us was called upon to make the great sacrifice." Indeed, with the exception of Charlie Rudd, of the Army Service Corps, who was called upon to be kicked by a horse, the village did not even suffer any casualties. Our rejoicings at the conclusion of Peace were whole-hearted.

Naturally, when we met to discuss the best way in which to give expression to our joy, our first thoughts were with our returned heroes. Miss Travers, who

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plays the organ with considerable expression on Sundays, suggested that a drinking fountain erected on the village green would be a pleasing memorial of their valour, if suitably inscribed. For instance, it might say, "In gratitude to our brave defenders who leaped to answer their country's call," followed by their names. Embury, the cobbler, who is always a wet blanket on these occasions, asked if "leaping" was the exact word for a young fellow who got into khaki in 1918, and then only in answer to his country's police. The meeting was more lively after this, and Mr. Bates, of Hill Farm, had to be personally assured by the Vicar that for his part he quite understood how it was that young Robert Bates had been unable to leave the farm before, and he was sure that our good friend Embury meant nothing personal by his, if he might say so, perhaps somewhat untimely observation. He would suggest himself that some such phrase as "who gallantly answered" would be more in keeping with Miss Travers' beautiful idea. He would venture to put it to the meeting that the inscription should be amended in this sense.

Mr. Clayton, the grocer and draper, interrupted to say that they were getting on too fast. Supposing they agreed upon a drinking fountain, who was going to do it? Was it going to be done in the village, or were they going to get sculptors and architects and such-like people from London? And if so—— The Vicar caught the eye of Miss Travers, and signalled to her to proceed; whereupon she explained that, as she had already told the Vicar in private, her nephew was studying art in London, and she was sure he would be only too glad to get Augustus James or one of those Academy artists to think of something really beautiful.

At this moment Embury said that he would like to ask two questions. First question—In what order

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were the names of our gallant defenders to be inscribed? The Vicar said that, speaking entirely without preparation and on the spur of the moment, he would imagine that an alphabetical order would be the most satisfactory. There was a general "Hear, hear," led by the Squire, who thus made his first contribution to the debate. "That's what I thought," said Embury. "Well, then, second question—What's coming out of the fountain?" The Vicar, a little surprised, said that presumably, my dear Embury, the fountain would give forth water. "Ah!" said Embury with great significance, and sat down.

Our village is a little slow at getting on to things; "leaping" is not the exact word for our movements at any time, either of brain or body. It is not surprising, therefore, that even Bates failed to realise for a moment that his son's name was to have precedence on a water-fountain. But when once he realised it, he refused to be pacified by the cobbler's explanation that he had only said "Ah!" Let those who had anything to say, he observed, speak out openly, and then we should know where we were. Embury's answer, that one could generally guess where *some* people were, and not be far wrong, was drowned in the ecclesiastical applause which greeted the rising of the Squire.

The Squire said that he—er—hadn't—er—intended—er—to say anything. But he thought—er—if he might—er—intervene—to—er—say something on the matter of—er—a matter which—er—well, they all knew what it was—in short—er—money. Because until they knew how they—er—stood, it was obvious that—it was obvious—quite obvious—well it was a question of how they stood. Whereupon he sat down.

The Vicar said that as had often happened before, the sound common sense of Sir John had saved them from undue rashness and precipitancy. They were

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getting on a little too fast. Their valued friend Miss Travers had made what he was not ashamed to call a suggestion both rare and beautiful, but alas ! in these prosaic modern days the sordid question of pounds, shillings, and pence could not be wholly disregarded. How much money would they have ?

Everybody looked at Sir John. There was an awkward silence, in which the Squire joined. . . .

Amid pushings and whisperings from his corner of the room, Charlie Rudd said that he would just like to say a few words for the boys, if all were willing. The Vicar said that certainly, certainly he might, my dear Rudd. So Charlie said that he would just like to say that with all respect to Miss Travers, who was a real lady, and many was the packet of fags he'd had from her out there, and all the other boys could say the same, and if some of them joined up sooner than others, well perhaps they did, but they all tried to do their bit, just like those who stayed at home, and they'd thrashed Jerry, and glad of it, fountains or no fountains, and pleased to be back again and see them all, just the same as ever, Mr. Bates and Mr. Embury and all of them, which was all he wanted to say, and the other boys would say the same, hoping no offence was meant, and that was all he wanted to say.

When the applause had died down, Mr. Clayton said that, in his opinion, as he had said before, they were getting on too fast. Did they want a fountain, that was the question. Who wanted it ? The Vicar replied that it would be a beautiful memento for their children of the stirring times through which their country had passed. Embury asked if Mr. Bates' child wanted a memento of — “ This is a general question, my dear Embury,” said the Vicar.

There rose slowly to his feet the landlord of the *Dog and Duck*. Celebrations, he said. We were celebrating this here peace. Now, as man to man, what did

## A PIOUS HYPERBOLE

celebrations mean? He asked any of them. What did it mean? Celebrations meant celebrating, and celebrating meant sitting down hearty-like, sitting down like Englishmen and—and celebrating. First, find how much money they'd got, same as Sir John said; that was right and proper. Then if so be as they wanted to leave the rest to *him*, well he'd be proud to do his best for them. They knew him. Do fair by him and he'd do fair by them. Soon as he knew how much money they'd got, and how many were going to sit down, then he could get to work. That was all *he'd* got to say about celebrations.

The enthusiasm was tremendous. But the Vicar looked anxious, and whispered to the Squire. The Squire shrugged his shoulders and murmured something, and the Vicar rose. They would be all glad to hear, he said, glad but not surprised, that with his customary generosity the Squire had decided to throw open his own beautiful gardens and pleasure-grounds to them on Peace Day and to take upon his own shoulders the burden of entertaining them. He would suggest that they now give Sir John three hearty cheers. This was done, and the proceedings closed.

A. A. MILNE

*An exaggeration  
and yet  
guiltless*

*Miss B. 12.12.38*

## A PIOUS HYPERBOLE

BEFORE my coronation there was no event in childhood that impressed itself on my memory with marked or singular distinction. My father's death, the result of a chill contracted during a hunting excursion, meant no more to me than a week of rooms gloomy and games forbidden; the decease of King Augustin, my uncle, appeared at the first instant of even less importance. I recollect the news coming. The King, having been always in frail health, had never married;

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seeing clearly but not far, he was a sad man : the fate that struck down his brother increased his natural melancholy ; he became almost a recluse, withdrew himself from the capital to a retired residence, and henceforward was little more than a name in which Prince von Hammerfeldt conducted the business of the country. Now and then my mother visited him ; once she brought back to me a letter from him, little of which I understood then, although I have since read often the touching words of his message. When he died, there was the same gloom as when my father left us ; but it seemed to me that I was treated a little differently ; the servants stared at me, my mother would look long at me with a half-admiring half-amused expression, and Victoria let me have all her toys. In Baroness von Krakenstein (or Krak, as we called her) alone there was no difference ; yet the explanation came from her, for when that evening I reached out my little hand and snatched a bit of cake from the dish, Krak caught my wrist, saying gravely—

“ Kings must not snatch, Augustin.”

“ Victoria, what do you get when you are a king ? ” I asked my sister that night. I was hardly eight, she nearing ten, and her worldly wisdom seemed great.

“ Oh, you have just what you want, and do what you like, and kill people that you don't like,” said she.

“ Don't you remember the Arabian Nights ? ”

“ Could I kill Krak ? ” I asked, choosing a concrete and tempting illustration of despotic power.

Victoria was puzzled.

“ She'd have to do something first, I suppose,” she answered vaguely. “ I should have been queen if you hadn't been born, Augustin.” Her tone now became rather plaintive.

“ But nobody has a queen if they can get a king,” said I serenely.

It is the coronation day that stands out in memory ;

the months that elapsed between my accession and that event are merged in a vague dimness. I think little difference was made in our household while we mourned the dead King. Krak was still sharp, imperious, and exacting. She had been my mother's governess, and came with her from Styria. I suppose she had learnt the necessity of sternness from her previous experience with Princess Gertrude, for that lady, my mother, a fair, small, slim woman, who preserved her girlishness of appearance till the approach of middle age, was of a strong and masterful temper. Only Krak and Hammerfeldt had any power over her ; Krak's seemed the result of ancient domination, the Prince's was won by a suave and coaxing deference that changed once a year or thereabouts to stern and uncompromising opposition. But with my early upbringing, and with Victoria's, Hammerfeldt had nothing to do ; my mother presided, and Krak executed. The spirit of Styria reigned in the nursery, rather than the softer code of our more Western country ; I doubt whether discipline was stricter in any house in Forstadt than in the royal palace.

They roused me at eight on my coronation day. My mother herself came to my bedside, and knelt down for a few minutes by it. Krak stood in the background, grim and gloomy. I was a little frightened, and asked what was afoot.

"You're to be crowned to-day, Augustin," said my mother. "You must be a good boy."

"Am I to be crowned king, mother ?"

"Yes, dear, in the cathedral. Will you be a good king ?"

"I'll be a great king, mother," said I. The Arabian Nights were still in my head.

She laughed and rose to her feet.

"Have him ready by ten o'clock, Baroness," she said. "I must go and have my coffee and then dress.

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And I must see that Victoria is properly dressed too."

"Are you going to be crowned, mother?" I asked.

"No," she said. "I shall be only Princess Heinrich still."

I looked at her with curiosity. A king is greater than a princess; should I be greater than my mother? And my mother was greater than Krak! Why, then—but Krak ended my musings by whisking me out of bed.

It was fine fun to ride in the carriage by my mother's side with Victoria and old Hammerfeldt opposite. Hammerfeldt was President of the Council of Regency; but I, knowing nothing of that, supposed my mother had asked him into our carriage because he amused us and gave us chocolates. My mother was very prettily dressed, and so was Victoria. I was very glad that Krak was in another vehicle. There were crowds of people in the street, cheering us more than they ever had before; I was taking off my hat all the time. Once or twice I held up my sword for them to see, but everybody laughed, and I would not do it any more. It was the first time that I had worn a sword, but I did not see why they should laugh. Victoria laughed most of all; indeed at last my mother scolded her, saying that swords were proper for men, and that I should be a man soon.

We reached the cathedral, and with my hand in my mother's I was led up the nave, till we came to the front of the High Altar. There was a very long service; I did not care about or heed much of it, until the Archbishop came down on to the lowest step, and my mother took my hand again and led me to him, and he put the crown on my head. I liked that, and turned round to see if the people were looking, and was just going to laugh at Victoria, when I saw Krak frowning at me; so I turned back and listened

to the Archbishop. He was a nice old man, but I did not understand very much of what he said. He talked about my uncle, my father, and the country, and what a king ought to do ; at last he leant down towards me, and told me in a low but very distinct voice that henceforward God was the only Power above me, and I had no lord except the King of Kings. He was a very old man with white hair, and when he had said this he seemed not to be able to go on for a minute. Perhaps he was tired, or did not know what to say next. Then he laid his hand on my head—they had taken the crown off because it was so heavy for me—and said in a whisper, “ Poor child ! ” but then he raised his voice, so that it rang all through the cathedral, and blessed me. Then my mother made me get up and turn and face the people ; she put the crown on my head again ; then she knelt and kissed my hand. I was very much surprised, and I saw Victoria trying hard not to laugh—because Krak was just by her. But I didn’t want to laugh ; I was too much surprised.

So far memory carries me ; the rest is blurred, until I found myself back in our own home, divested of my military costume, but allowed, as a special treat, to have my sword beside me when we sat down to tea. We had many good things for tea, and even Krak was thawed into amiability ; she told me that I had behaved very well in the cathedral, and that I should see the fireworks from the window presently. It was winter and soon dark. The fireworks began at seven ; I remember them very well. Above all I recollect the fine excitement of seeing my own name in great long golden letters, with a word after them that Krak told me I ought to know meant “ King,” and was of the third declension. “ *Rex, Regis,*” said Krak, and told poor Victoria to go on. Victoria was far too excited, and Krak said we must both learn it to-morrow ; but

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we were clapping our hands, and didn't pay much heed. Then Hammerfeldt came in and held me up at the window for a few minutes, telling me to kiss my hand to the people. I did as he told me ; then the crowd began to go away, and Krak said it was bedtime.

Now here I might conclude the story of my coronation day ; but an episode remains trivial and ludicrous enough, yet most firmly embedded in my memory. Indeed it has always for me a significance quite independent of its obvious import ; it seems to symbolise the truth which the experience of all my life has taught me. Perhaps I throw dignity to the winds in recording it ; I intend to do the like all through what I write ; for, to my thinking, where dignity comes in at the door sincerity flies out of the window. I was not tired after the day, or I was too excited to feel tired. My small brain was agog ; my little head was turned. Amidst all that I did not understand I understood enough to conceive that I had become a great man. I saw Victoria led off to bed, and going meekly. But I was not as Victoria ; she was not a king, as I was ; mother had not knelt before her ; the Archbishop had not told Victoria that she had no lord except the King of Kings. Perhaps I was hardly to blame when I took his words as excluding the domination of women, of Krak, even of the mother who had knelt and kissed my hands. At any rate I was in a wilful mood. Old Anna, the nurse, had put Victoria to bed, and now came through the door that divided our rooms and proposed to assist me in my undressing. I was wilful and defiant ; I refused most flatly to go to bed. Anna was perplexed ; unquestionably a new and reverential air was perceptible in Anna ; the detection of it was fuel to my fires of rebellion. Anna sent for Krak ; in the interval before the governess's arrival I grew uneasy. I half wished I had gone to bed quietly, but

now I was in for the battle. Had there been any meaning in what the Archbishop said, or had there not? Was it true, or had he misled me? I had believed him, and was minded to try the issue; I sat in my chair attempting to whistle as my groom had taught me. Krak came; I whistled on; there was a whispered consultation between Anna and Krak; then Krak told me that I was to go to bed, and bade me begin the process by taking off my shoes. I looked her full and fair in the face.

"I won't till I choose," said I. "I'm king now"; and then I quoted to Krak what the Archbishop had said. She lifted her hands in amazement and wrath.

"I shall have to fetch your mother," she said.

"I'm above my mother; she knelt to me," I retorted triumphantly.

Krak advanced towards me.

"Augustin, take off your shoes," said she.

I had no love for Krak. Dearest of all gifts of sovereignty would be the power of defying Krak.

"Do you really want me to take them off?" I asked.

"This instant," commanded Krak.

I do not justify my action; yet perhaps the Archbishop should have been more careful of what he said. My answer to Krak was, "Take them, then." And I snatched off one of them and threw it at Krak. It missed most narrowly the end of her long nose, and lodged, harmlessly enough, on Anna's broad bosom. I sat there, exultant, fearful, and defiant.

Krak spoke to Anna in a low whisper; then they both went out, leaving me alone in the big room. I grew afraid, partly because I was alone, partly for what I had done. I could undress myself, although I was not, as a rule, allowed to. I tumbled quickly out of my clothes, and had just slipped on my nightshirt, when the door opened, and my mother entered,

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followed by Krak. My mother looked very young and pretty, but she also looked severe.

"Is this true, Augustin?" she asked, sitting down by the fire.

"Yes, mother," said I, arrested in my flight towards bed.

"You refused to obey the Baroness?"

"Yes. I'm king now."

"And threw your shoe at her?"

"The Archbishop said——" I began.

"Be quiet," said my mother, and she turned her head and listened to Krak, who began to whisper in her ear. A moment later she turned to me.

"You must do as you are told," she said; "and you must apologise to the Baroness."

"I'd have taken them off if she had asked me," I said, "but she ordered me."

"She has a right to order you."

"Is she God?" I asked, pointing scornfully at Krak. Really the Archbishop must bear some of the responsibility.

Krak whispered again; again my mother turned to me.

"Will you apologise, Augustin?" she said.

"No," said I stubbornly.

Krak whispered again. I heard my mother say, with a little laugh, "But to-day, Baroness!" Then she sighed and looked round at me.

"Do apologise, Augustin," said she.

"I'll apologise to you, not to her," I said.

She looked at the Baroness, then at me, then back to the Baroness; then she smiled and sighed.

"I suppose so. He must learn it. But not much to-night, Baroness. Just enough to—to show him."

Krak came towards me; a moment later I occupied a position which, to my lively discomfort, I had filled once or twice before in my short life, but which I had

not supposed that I should fill again after what the Archbishop had said. I set my teeth to endure ; I was full of bewilderment, surprise, and anger. The Archbishop had played me terribly false ; the Arabian Nights were no less delusive. Krak was as unmoved and business-like as usual. I was determined not to cry—not to-night. I was not very hard tried ; almost directly my mother said, “ That will do.” There was a pause ; no doubt Krak’s face expressed a surprised protest. “ Yes, that’s enough to-day,” said my mother, and she added, “ Get into bed, Augustin. You must learn to be an obedient boy before you can be a good king.”

The moment I was released I ran and leapt into bed, hiding my face under the clothes. I heard my mother come and say, “ Won’t you kiss me ? ” but I was very angry ; I did not understand why they made me a king, and then beat me because I behaved like all the kings I had been told or read about. Moreover I had begun to cry now, and I would have been killed sooner than let Krak see that. So presently my mother went away, and Krak too. Then Anna came and tried to turn down the clothes, but I would not let her. I hung on to them hard, for I was still crying. I heard Anna sigh, “ Poor dearie ! ” ; then she went away ; but directly after Victoria’s voice came, saying, “ Anna says I may come in with you. May I, please, Augustin ? ” I let her move the bed-clothes and get in with me ; and I put my arms round her neck. Victoria comforted me as best she could.

“ You’ll be a real king when you grow up,” she said.

A thought struck me—a rapturous thought, born of the Arabian Nights. (In the Archbishop lay no comfort at all.)

“ Yes,” I cried, “ and then I’ll bastinado Krak ! ” With this comforting thought I fell asleep.

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

A strange day, this of my coronation, odd to pass through, to the highest degree illuminating in retrospect. I did not live to bastinado Krak ; nor would I now had I the power. What they did was perhaps a little cruel, a little Styrian, as Victoria and I used covertly to say of such harsh measures ; but how valuable a lesson on the state and fortune of kings ! The King is one, the man another. The King is crowned, the man is lashed ; they give us greatness in words : in fact we are our servants' servants. Little as I liked the thing at the time, I cannot now regret that I was chastised on my coronation day. I was thus put into an attitude eminently conducive to the perception of truth, and to a realisation of the facts of my position. I forgive thee the blows, Krak—Lo, I forgive thee !

ANTHONY HOPE

## THE DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

THE important Commission was the one devoted to Disarmament. All the senior delegates were represented upon it, and Donald stood in a crowd upon the steps of the Secretariat one morning and watched them arrive. The Frenchmen drove up in four magnificent Delage cars with the Tricolor on the radiators ; the Spaniards were in Hispano-Suizas, for to the ignorant world the Hispano is even more Spanish than its name ; the Italians in Isotta-Fraschinis, with their secretaries in Fiats ; the Belgians in Minervas ; while the Germans outdid everyone in vast silver Mercédès cars, driven by world-famous racing-drivers. The United States official Observers were mostly in Packards, Chryslers, Graham-Paiges, Willys-Knights, Buicks, Oldsmobiles, and Stutzes, and the Earl of Osbaldestone and his two chief colleagues came in a four-wheel cab, and his secretaries, Mr. Carteret-

## THE DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

Pendragon, Mr. Carshalton-Stanbury, and Mr. Woldingham-Uffington, walked.

Fortunately the prestige of British motor manufacturers was well maintained by the eleven Rolls-Royces, with real tortoiseshell bodies and gold bonnets, specially brought over from England by the Right Honourable Lieutenant-General the Maharajah of Hyderadore.

Donald attended several of the debates of the Disarmament Commission and listened to a masterly speech, lasting nearly an hour and three-quarters, in which the Earl of Osbaldestone explained that Great Britain had no special views on the burning question of the reduction and limitation of the output of nails for the horseshoes of cavalry horses, and to the superb oration by the French Foreign Minister which proved, to the complete satisfaction of Poland, Roumania, Czecho-Slovakia, and Yugo-Slavia, that a reduction of cavalry horseshoe-nails would be to France the equivalent of the withdrawal from the Vosges, the surrender of Metz, and the abandonment of conscription. His peroration, ending with the immortal words, "The France of Charlemagne, of Gambetta, of Boulanger, the France of the 22nd of October, the France of the 18th of November, and the France of the 4th of March, is built upon the nails of her immortal horses," drew thunders of applause.

He was followed by a Roumanian lady who descanted a good deal upon the beauties of dawn coming over distant mountain-tops, and whose hand was admiringly kissed at the end of her speech by numbers of swarthy delegates, and she was followed by a small Lithuanian who pointed out in a squeaky voice that the whole question of horseshoes, and nails for horseshoes, was inextricably bound up with the act of dastardly brigandage by which Poland had stolen the ancient Lithuanian capital of Vilna. At this point an unseemly commotion was caused by a loud burst

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

of laughter from a group consisting of the South African representative, the second Indian delegate, and a United States Observer, to whom the Foreign Minister of the Irish Free State had just whispered a vulgar story. The Vice-Chairman, a courtly Chinese, saved the situation by springing to his feet and saying, in slow but perfect French, "Honourable gentlemen and ladies of the Commission, of which I have the honour unworthily to act as Vice-Chairman, I would crave the permission of you all to put the following consideration before you. The hour is now a quarter to two, and we have laboured long and earnestly this morning in the cause that we all have at heart, and I would put it to you, in all deference and submission, that the time is at hand when we must decide whether to adjourn now for midday refreshment and resume our task, our so important task, with redoubled vigour later in the day, or whether to continue without rest or interval until we have settled this problem while it is fresh in our minds. I submit, most honourable ladies and gentlemen of the Commission, that we should now come to a decision upon this matter. I will ask the most honourable interpreter to render into English the poor observations which I have had the honour to address to you."

He bowed with old-world grace to right and to left and sat down. The interpreter, a rosy youth whose knowledge of languages was only equalled by the profundity of his thirst, sprang to his feet eagerly and said in a loud voice, "The Vice-Chairman says that if we don't stop now we'll be late for lunch," and, snapping an elastic band round his note-book, he thrust it under his arm and walked out of the room. There was a helpless pause for a moment or two, and then the delegates, in ones and twos, headed by the British Dominions, streamed out into the corridor.

A. G. MACDONELL

# THOUGHTS

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## LONGER SERMONS

"TWENTY minutes with a leaning to mercy," was once declared by a divine to be the ideal length of a sermon. Half-an-hour, without any such compassionate concession to human weakness and impatience, was the length recently recommended by the Archbishop of York. But now there comes a story of a Mr. Brown, the negro pastor of a Baptist church at Washington, D.C., who is reported to have delivered a sermon which lasted for twelve hours and ten minutes, supporting himself in this great task of exhortation by eating four lamb chops and the leg of a chicken in the midst of it. That certainly was a marvellous feat of oratorical endurance, though the preacher's motive for undertaking it can only be guessed. Did he seriously suppose that he would be able to do twenty-four times as much for the amelioration of the world by denouncing its wickedness for twelve hours on end as a less voluble man would accomplish by denouncing it for a short thirty minutes? Did he think it better to express his disapproval of all imaginable iniquities in a single discourse for fear lest his hearers should infer that any sin not specifically mentioned in any one discourse was permissible or venial, and conclude that there could be no particular harm in inebriety or gambling, because he had said nothing about it when denouncing dancing or companionate marriages? Or did he merely wish to prove that America could produce sermons of a magnitude comparable with that of her waterfalls, her skyscrapers, and her financial crises?

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

These are questions difficult to answer ; but Mr. Brown's remarkable performance suggests two points which it seems worth while to make. The first is that the endurance of the congregation who sat through the sermon is even more astonishing than that of the preacher who delivered it, seeing that they were not, like him, helped and cheered by chops or any other sustaining refectio. The second is that the discomfort inflicted by inordinately long sermons has sometimes been recognised even by preachers who were not themselves conspicuous for their brevity. St. Paul, who preached at great length, though not quite so long as Mr. Brown, took, it will be remembered, a sympathetic view of the case of Eutychus, who fell asleep while he was doing so. Sydney Smith, a Canon of St. Paul's, once said that certain people deserved to be "preached to death by wild curates" ; and at Geneva, in Calvin's time, the Consistory Court did actually sentence some of the citizens—the illustrious Bonivard amongst others—to "listen to sermons" as a punishment for levity and backsliding. These are facts to which it may be useful to direct the attention of any preacher who happens to be thinking of Mr. Brown as a model worthy of imitation. ANON.

## ON BEING A JONAH

I HAVE never much cared for the minor prophets as men. Circumstances, of course, were against them. They fell upon evil times, and it was their duty—one sometimes beats down the suspicion that it was also their pleasure—to spend most of their time denouncing those who offered up burnt sacrifices in high places or walked in the way of the children of iniquity. Their forefingers were fixed in the posture of accusation, and their favourite monosyllable was "Woe." They were

## ON BEING A JONAH

disinterested men, but brooding, angry, vehement, sometimes soured, men. Amongst them all I have always felt least sympathy for the prophet Jonah. A certain compassion with him in his submarine period we must all, no doubt, have felt. But he is not an attractive character. His vindictiveness against the Ninevites was extreme. I have not my Bible with me, but I seem to remember that he was disappointed when they were not all extirpated : Jehovah was too merciful for him. A morose, splenetic, fanatical, black-avised man.

I feel a little closer to Jonah now than I did. They say that men, the survivors from some great shared enterprise or calamity, are bound together by a comradeship of experience. It is so ; millions of soldiers can attest the fact. It is something of this kind that has drawn me closer to the prophet Jonah. Contact has been established. We have suffered alike, and we have something in common. Now I hasten to add that I have not been swallowed by a whale. Nor do I expect to be. Palmists who have examined my clerkly hand have predicted many and various fates for me, numerous early deaths in the most diverse circumstances, deaths by field and flood, ship and railway. But not even a palmist—and palmists stop at little—has ever told me that I should, mortally or otherwise, lodge in the belly of a great fish. It is not this ; it is the immediately prior experience that has, though by proxy, befallen me.

I discovered that one of my works had for some weeks been out of print. I asked my publisher why this was. His answer took the form of a file of correspondence received by him. The first letter (as this is not an advt. I suppress the name of the book) was from a firm of printers in Scotland. It ran :—

DEAR SIR,—We have received a communication

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

from the —— Shipping Company —— informing us that the s.s. ——, which sailed on the 20th inst., has been aground and that a portion of the cargo had been jettisoned. We despatched by this boat the undernoted on your account, and shall be glad to know at your earliest, if any or part of it has been received.

The undernoted consisted of a thousand copies of me. Inquiries followed ; a letter passed the other way ; and a second communication came from Caledonia :—

DEAR SIRs,—We are in receipt of your letter of January 2nd and regret to hear that the 5 bales have been jettisoned, which confirms the report we have received. We are sorry to say they were not insured by us.

And finally, the binders woke up. They, too, apparently, had been all agog to receive my works ; looking forward to binding them. But they were men accustomed to concealing their emotions, typically English, reluctant to make demonstrations of sorrow or wear their hearts on their sleeves. The letter ran :—

DEAR MR. ——, —The 5 Bales of above have been thrown overboard we have found out.—Yours faithfully, . . .

There ended the dossier.

I have endeavoured, lying awake in the darkness, to reconstruct the scene. The sailors, I think, were slightly dubious about Jonah from the first day out. They thought there was something a little sinister about him. He was not “ simpatico,” not (as the Esperantists so compactly put it) “ samideano.” That first day out of port they looked at him with side-long eyes, and wondered whether they wouldn't have

preferred a black cat or a Friday sailing. The second day they thought seriously of dumping him into a barrel of pork in order to express their dislike and distrust. The third day, as you will see, there was nearly a mutiny over the fatal five bales of incomprehensible books. Similarly, I conceive that these mariners, who out of all that cargo selected my works for sacrifice when the moment for sacrifice came, had scented in them something they disliked from the start.

The steamer, I think, was going down the Firth of Forth, in a dead-calm, with the black smoke lying flat and thick behind her, when some idle seamen, clambering over the cargo, came upon those five bales and wondered what they contained. One of them had a slight rent through which protruded a glaring yellow cover. Ben Gunn, or Ole Petersen, yielded, tugged, and began to peruse. He shifted his quid, and knitted his brows; he uttered a full-flavoured nautical equivalent of Stevenson's young man's exclamation on seeing the old *Athenaeum*: "Golly, what a paper!" Very gingerly he stuffed my incomprehensible compositions back into the sack, and went to ruminate. At evening in the fo'c'sle he grumbled to his mates that there was something unlucky on board, gibberish in what looked like English and bore some resemblance to verse. All along the Lothian and Berwick coast when darkness fell the watch cast glances of malediction upon those sacks, whose canvas faintly shone in the lantern light.

The wind freshened. It rained. The wind whistled. It sleeted. The wind roared. The sea rose. Lurching and pitching she went ahead, drifting shorewards, shipping water at every roll. Through the mirk could be descried a lee shore, cliffs, one or two misty lights. "We must lighten or——" shouted the captain to the first officer. "Aye, aye, sir,"

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replied the first officer to the captain. "Is there any cargo with which the world could easily dispense?" asked the captain. "Yes, sir," said the first officer: "there are many volumes of Herbert Spencer, ten crates of gramophones, and the collected edition of Mr. ——'s speeches." "I like them all," said the captain. "Please suggest something else." At this point the conversation was cut into and so was the Gordian knot. A bronzed and bearded sailor staggered up; holding on to the taffrail with one hand and touching his forelock with the other, he explained that the crew refused to do another hand's turn unless five bales of books by Squire were thrown overboard. "We knew, sir," said he, "that there was suthin' fishy about them books the moment they come aboard. This ship won't come to no good until they be over the side." There was no argument. The unhappy books, speechless themselves, had no defenders. Ten men with glittering eyes and bared teeth crawled towards them, two to a bale. They seized them, and with a last vengeful curse flung them far out into the maw of an advancing wave. A thousand copies! Down they fell, through the boiling wrath of the sea's surface, into the more equable waters below, and, in zigzag shift, settled to the sandy bottom. There they lie at this moment, in the little depressions they have made. It is a fine day and something of sunlight filters down to them. One of the sacks has burst open and its fatigued contents have tumbled out; shut, gaping, open wide, face upwards, face downwards. Odd corners of print can be seen; and at intervals through the opaque green a phantom fish glides up and, with staring eyes, slowly wagging its fins and gills, gapes at this pile of indigestible matter. Then he goes away. And I, for one, don't blame him.

But I have my consolations. Those ruffians may

## A MEDITATION UPON A BROOMSTICK

have thrown me overboard. But it did not save them.  
They were wrecked.

SIR JOHN SQUIRE

*ephemeral character of human beings depicted*

## A MEDITATION UPON A BROOMSTICK

THIS single stick, which you now behold ingloriously lying in that neglected corner, I once knew in a flourishing state in a forest ; it was full of sap, full of leaves, and full of boughs ; but now in vain does the busy art of man pretend to vie with nature, by tying that withered bundle of twigs to its sapless trunk ; it is now at best but the reverse of what it was, a tree turned upside down, the branches on the earth, and the root in the air ; it is now handled by every dirty wench, condemned to do her drudgery, and, by a capricious kind of fate, destined to make her things clean, and be nasty itself ; at length, worn out to the stumps in the service of the maids, it is either thrown out of doors, or condemned to the last use of kindling a fire. When I beheld this, I sighed, and said within myself : Surely mortal man is a broomstick ! nature sent him into the world strong and lusty, in a thriving condition, wearing his own hair on his head, the proper branches of this reasoning vegetable, until the axe of intemperance has lopped off his green boughs, and left him a withered trunk ; he then flies to art, and puts on a periwig, valuing himself upon an unnatural bundle of hairs, all covered with powder, that never grew on his head ; but now should this our broomstick pretend to enter the scene, proud of those birchen spoils it never bore, and all covered with dust, though the sweepings of the finest lady's chamber, we should be apt to ridicule and despise its vanity. Partial judges that we are of our own excellences, and other men's defaults !

But a broomstick, perhaps you will say, is an emblem

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

of a tree standing on its head : and pray, what is man but a topsy-turvy creature, his animal faculties perpetually mounted on his rational, his head where his heels should be—grovelling on the earth ! and yet, with all his faults, he sets to be a universal reformer and corrector of abuses, a remover of grievances ; rakes into every slut's corner of nature, bringing hidden corruptions to the light, and raises a mighty dust where there was none before, sharing deeply all the while in the very same pollutions he pretends to sweep away. His last days are spent in slavery to women, and generally the least deserving ; till, worn to the stumps, like his brother-besom, he is either kicked out of doors, or made use of to kindle flames for others to warm themselves by.

JONATHAN SWIFT

## LITERATURE

[Speech proposing the toast of " Literature " at an Anniversary Dinner of the Royal Literary Fund.]

SOME of you no doubt have observed, both having been afflicted yourselves and having seen others suffering, that the after-dinner speech tends to be divided, like ancient Gaul, into three parts. In the first part the speaker invites attention, on many grounds, to the uncommon difficulty of his particular task. In the second part he dwells, with many a variation of simulated modesty, on his own personal unfitness and inadequacy for an ordeal so tremendous. In the third part, if time permits, and if he happens to think of it, he says a word or two about the subject of his toast. Now, although I am much tempted to follow a line of precedents at once so well established and so manifestly convenient, I will dare to ask you on the present occasion to take the first two parts of the speech for granted and to plunge forthwith, though

only for a moment, into the shoreless sea of "Literature" with a capital L. Perhaps you will not think it a mere evasion if I begin, as is so often done, with an invocation to the Muse. You remember the case of the mathematical man who was minded to compete for the prize for Latin verse. He looked up the first few pages of all the authors he had read, or was supposed to have read, in the Lower Fourth, and at length, and not without difficulty, produced these two lines, and only these two lines :—

"Musa mihi dic dic, dic dic mihi musa mihi dic :  
Musa mihi dic dic : dic mihi, dic mihi, dic."

And with that expression, as they say in the House of Commons, I venture to associate myself. Well, it will be hardly disputed that literature is, as hymns are said to be, ancient and modern, and, comparisons being proverbially odious, it is usual and attractive to compare ancient and modern literature to the serious disadvantage of one or the other. But is it really necessary to enter upon any such campaign? There is a pleasant story, which happens to be true, of a very small boy in a very big school where once a year every boy in every form was required to grapple with a general paper. He directed his mind to a question in these terms : "Contrast and compare Hannibal and Julius Caesar : in your opinion which was the greater General?"—and in three hours he produced this answer : "If we are asked to contrast and compare Hannibal and Julius Caesar, if we are invited to consider the armies which they led, the battles which they fought, the victories which they won, the books which they wrote, and if we are then confronted with the question : 'In your opinion which was the greater General?' then our answer is bound to be in the affirmative." The precocious infant, you may think, exhibited some at least of the genuine warranted

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

marks of Treasury Bench. But—or shall I not rather say “and”—may we not well observe his catholicity of taste? We may have our individual preferences; but why should we exclude? We may give our vote for the “grand old fortifying classical curriculum”; but why should we smash the windows of every author whose books are not more than four centuries old? Literature has been defined as “the best that has been thought in the world expressed in the best way.” Perhaps, if one might employ a modern metaphor, it might be said that, thanks to printing, literature has become a colossal and indeed universal system of broadcasting, which, without the necessity of providing a receiver or even of procuring a licence, offers a man with equal and constant efficiency, whether from stations that are in time and place quite near to him, or from stations situated in the remotest climes or belonging to the remotest times, authentic and intimate communion with all that is or has been most interesting in the world. “*Sunt lacrimae rerum*”—also *crocodilorum*—things have their tears, and crocodiles have theirs. We have had enough, and more than enough, of hollow devotion and withered orthodoxy. No man, as Samuel Johnson said, is a hypocrite in his pleasures, and therefore, as we may add, it is better to allow every man and even every donkey, to graze at will, the common of literature, especially as they will do so whether you allow them or not. There are those, no doubt, and most of us are sometimes among them, who deplore the appalling and indiscriminate fertility of the printing press. But, after all, nobody is compelled to read against his will. In this department of life at any rate, there is a system of local option which nobody could describe as a system of local coercion in disguise. The variety is delightful to the reflective mind, and not at all—except for controversial purposes—bewildering. Here is the

## LITERATURE

“specialist” who learns more and more about less and less, there is the “dilettante” who learns less and less about more and more. Hither comes the “pessimist” who says that where everything is bad, it must be good to know the worst. There goes the optimist who says that the world is the best of all possible worlds and everything in it is a necessary evil. The world is wide, paper and ink are cheap, and there is room for all—poets, dramatists, and novelists, historians, philosophers, and biographers; yes, even chemists and economists and (for persons of ungoverned passions) the best of authorities on the repulsive subject of statistics. What with income-tax and super-tax and the high price of commodities, the world tends to become sadly utilitarian. It is not enough that the gum on the postage-stamp should be adhesive; it must also be nutritious. It is not enough that books should amuse us and make us forget, they must on the contrary improve us and cause us to remember. When we listen to heresies like these, are we not tempted to exclaim in the beautiful words of Thackeray:—

“Oh no! oh no! oh no! oh no! oh no!  
It shall not, must not, cannot e'er be so?”

I remember many years ago calling upon a distinguished person in an ancient college in an ancient University. Before he came into the room I had an opportunity of observing the volumes which he treasured upon his shelves and within reach of his hand. What, I wondered, are the chosen authors, fit though few, whom this learned man cherishes with all the affection of Lamb, and analyses with all the acuteness of Socrates? Greatly daring, I looked and saw, and they were—the current volume of the *University Calendar* and about forty volumes of Ruff's *Guide to the Turf*.

But enough of statistics, as they say in both Houses

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

of Parliament. And indeed the mind willingly turns away from the contemplation of such actions. But the dislike of literature is naturally in so many cases so strong in the human mind that one is tempted to ask what the secret of literature is. What is its magic? Whence comes its power? Samuel Johnson said indeed that no man but a blockhead ever wrote except for money. Yet the same man said, and said truly, that the chief glory of every people arises from its authors. What is the explanation, if indeed we can find it? Well, on the last page of a little story that I read the other day there came the first touch of human nature in the book. The detective hero asked the heroine to marry him. She did not say "No." "You knew all the time that I loved you," said the clumsy fellow. "Yes," she replied, "but we like to be told." Is not that the relation of literature to life? It is the relation of love-making to love. The world, like woman, loves to be told, and it is the function of literature to satisfy that demand. By wise economy of nature those who do deeds can rarely talk or write about them. There are some exceptions—for example, Julius Caesar and Lord Balfour—but the existence of an exception proves the existence of a rule. So literature and deeds are the two hemispheres that make the complete sphere of life, each inspiring and completing the other. There are those who say that anticipated pleasure is better than realised pleasure, but in truth and in fact is not post-dated pleasure better than either? The statesman, we may well imagine, never derives much pleasure from making a speech. But to read it next morning, to see his periods rounded, his similes polished, and his words converted into literature—this, we may fancy, makes him as happy as a dog with two tails. Literature, I suggest to you, is the post-dated pleasure of life, fixed and made eternal. It is, if you will permit the metaphor,

## LITERATURE

the sieve of human life which passes the dregs through and leaves us the pure vintage, ever improving with age, so that the longer a great literary work lasts the better it tastes, and, in a sense, at any rate, this telling of the tale, this filtering of life which is the agreeable task of literature, is greater than the deeds which it records or criticises. Some of you, many of you perhaps, still read Pindar's Odes. Do you ever read them without wondering what those hefty young men who won the chariot races made of Pindar's praise of their deeds? Did they not think him a highbrow, an unintelligible literary "old bean," something (if you will forgive the anachronism) between Walt Whitman and Algernon Charles Swinburne? Yet the fact remains that the deeds of those young men are forgotten, and Pindar is still read. Great deeds send out their ripples to the end of time, but in a few generations, even the greatest storm subsides into invisibility. It is literature that preserves the memory of great deeds. It is literature that makes fame—

"But the fair guerdon when we hope to find  
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,  
Comes the blind Fury with the abhorrèd shears,  
And slits the thin-spun life. 'But not the praise,'  
Phoebus replied, and touched my trembling ears."

That is the point. "But not the praise." Nor is it great deeds only that literature makes immortal, but all things that are true in human nature and memorable. It is, so to say, the feminine element. Man acts—literature and women immortalise.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I give you, with the greatest goodwill, the toast of "Literature."

LORD HEWART

AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

RECIPE FOR AN EPIC POEM

It is no small pleasure to me, who am zealous in the interests of learning, to think I may have the honour of leading the town into a very new and uncommon road of criticism. As that kind of literature is at present carried on, it consists only in a knowledge of mechanic rules which contribute to the structure of different sorts of poetry ; as the receipts of good housewives do to the making puddings of flour, oranges, plums, or any other ingredients. It would, methinks, make these my instructions more easily intelligible to ordinary readers, if I discoursed of these matters in the style in which ladies learned in economics dictate to their pupils for the improvement of the kitchen and larder. I shall begin with Epic Poetry, because the critics agree it is the greatest work human nature is capable of.

*For the Fable.*—Take out of any old poem, history-book, romance or legend—for instance, Geoffrey of Monmouth, or Don Belianis of Greece—those parts of the story which afford most scope for long descriptions : put these pieces together, and throw all the adventures you fancy into one tale. Then take a hero whom you may choose for the sound of his name, and put him into the midst of these adventures : there let him work for twelve books ; at the end of which, you may take him out ready prepared to conquer or to marry ; it being necessary that the conclusion of an Epic Poem be fortunate.

*To make an Episode.*—Take any remaining adventure of your former collection, in which you could no way involve your hero ; or any unfortunate accident that was too good to be thrown away and it will be of use, applied to any other person who may be lost and evaporate in the course of the work, without the least damage to the composition.

## RECIPE FOR AN EPIC POEM

*For the Moral and Allegory.*—These you may extract out of the fable afterwards at your leisure. Be sure you strain them sufficiently.

*For the Manners.*—For those of the hero, take all the best qualities you can find in all the best celebrated heroes of antiquity ; if they will not be reduced to a consistency, lay them all in a heap upon him. But be sure they are qualities which your patron would be thought to have ; and to prevent any mistake which the world may be subject to, select from the alphabet those capital letters that compose his name, and set them at the head of a dedication before your poem. However, do not absolutely observe the exact quantity of these virtues, it not being determined whether or no it be necessary for the hero of a poem to be an honest man.—For the under characters, gather them from Homer and Virgil, and change the names as occasion serves.

*For the Machines.*—Take of deities, male and female, as many as you can use ; separate them into two equal parts, and keep Jupiter in the middle. Let Juno put him in a ferment, and Venus mollify him. Remember on all occasions to make use of volatile Mercury. If you have need of devils, draw them out of Milton's *Paradise* and extract your spirits from Tasso. The use of these machines is evident ; for since no Epic Poem can possibly subsist without them, the wisest way is to reserve them for your greatest necessities. When you cannot extricate your hero by any human means, or yourself by your own wits, seek relief from Heaven, and the gods will do your business very readily. This is according to the direct prescription of Horace in his *Art of Poetry* :—

“Nec deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus  
Inciderit——”

“Never presume to make a god appear,  
But for a business worthy of a god” (Roscommon).

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

That is to say that a poet should never call upon the gods for their assistance, but when he is in great perplexity.

*For the Descriptions. For a Tempest.*—Take Eurus, Zephyr, Auster, and Boreas and cast them together in one verse ; add to these, of rain, lightning, and of thunder (the loudest you can), *Quantum sufficit*. Mix your clouds and billows well together till they foam, and thicken your description here and there with a quicksand. Brew your tempest well in your head before you set it a-blowing.

*For a Battle.*—Pick a large quantity of images and descriptions from Homer's *Iliads* ; with a spice or two of Virgil ; and if there remains any overplus, you may lay them by for a skirmish. Season it well with similes, and it will make an excellent battle.

*For a Burning Town.*—If such a description be necessary, because it is certain there is one in Virgil, Old Troy is ready burnt to your hands. But if you fear that would be thought borrowed, a chapter or two of the *Theory of the Conflagration*, well circumstanced, and done into verse, will be a good *succedaneum*.

As for Similes and Metaphors, they may be found all over the creation ; the most ignorant may gather them ; but the danger is in applying them. For this, advise with your bookseller.

*For the Language.*—(I mean the diction.) Here it will do well to be an imitator of Milton, for you will find it easier to imitate him in this than anything else. Hebraisms and Grecisms are to be found in him without the trouble of learning the languages. I knew a painter, who, like our poet, had no genius, make his daubings be thought original by setting them in the smoke. You may, in the same manner, give the venerable air of antiquity to your piece by darkening it up and down with Old English. With this you may be easily furnished upon any occasion by

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the Dictionary commonly printed at the end of Chaucer.

I must not conclude without cautioning all writers without genius in one material point ; which is, never to be afraid of having too much fire in their works. I should advise rather to take their warmest thoughts, and spread them abroad upon paper, for they are observed to cool before they are read.

ALEXANDER POPE

## JARGON

You must not confuse Jargon with what is called Journalese. The two overlap, indeed, and have a knack of assimilating each other's vices. But Jargon finds, maybe, the most of its votaries among good douce people who have never written to or for a newspaper in their life, who would never talk of "adverse climatic conditions" when they mean "bad weather"; who have never trifled with verbs such as "obsess," "recrudesce," "envisage," "adumbrate," or with phrases such as "the psychological moment," "the true inwardness," "it gives furiously to think." It dallies with Latinity—"sub silentio," "de die in diem," "cui bono?" (always in the sense, unsuspected by Cicero, of "What is the profit?")—but not for the sake of style. Your journalist at the worst is an artist in his way : he daubs paint of this kind upon the lily with a professional zeal ; the more flagrant (or, to use his own word, arresting) the pigment, the happier is his soul. Like the Babu he is trying all the while to embellish our poor language; to make it more floriferous, more poetical—like the Babu for example who, reporting his mother's death, wrote, "Regret to inform you, the hand that rocked the cradle has kicked the bucket."

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*There* is metaphor : *there* is ornament : *there* is a sense of poetry, though as yet groping in a world unrealised. No such gusto marks—no such zeal, artistic or professional, animates—the practitioners of Jargon, who are, most of them (I repeat), *douce respectable* persons. Caution is its father : the instinct to save everything and especially trouble : its mother, Indolence. It looks precise, but is not. It is, in these times, *safe* : a thousand men have said it before and not one to your knowledge had been prosecuted for it. And so, like respectability in Chicago, Jargon stalks unchecked in our midst. It is becoming the language of Parliament : it has become the medium through which Boards of Government, County Councils, Syndicates, Committees, Commercial Firms, express the processes as well as the conclusions of their thought and so voice the reason of their being.

Has a Minister to say “No” in the House of Commons? Some men are constitutionally incapable of saying no : but the Minister conveys it thus : “The answer to the question is in the negative.” That means “no.” Can you discover it to mean anything less, or anything more except that the speaker is a pompous person?—which was no part of the information demanded.

That is Jargon, and it happens to be accurate. But as a rule Jargon is by no means accurate, its method being to walk circumspectly around its target ; and its faith, that having done so it has either hit the bull’s-eye or at least achieved something equivalent, and safer.

Thus the Clerk of a Board of Guardians will minute that :—

“In the case of John Jenkins deceased, the coffin provided was of the usual character.”

Now this is not accurate. “In the case of John

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Jenkins deceased," for whom a coffin was supplied, it is wholly superfluous to tell us that he is deceased. But actually John Jenkins never had more than one case, and that was the coffin. The Clerk says he had two—a coffin in a case : but I suspect the Clerk to be mistaken, and I am sure he errs in telling us that the coffin was of the usual character : for coffins have no character, usual or unusual.

For another example (I shall not tell you whence derived) :— *Pl. Plutonium Cat. Lamb. 1850. 1851.*

"In the case of every candidate who is placed in the first class [So you see the lucky fellow gets a case as well as a first class. He might be a stuffed animal : perhaps he is]—In the case of every candidate who is placed in the first class the class-list will show by some convenient mark (1) the Section or Sections for proficiency in which he is placed in the first class and (2) the Section or Sections (if any) in which he has passed with special distinction."

"The Section or Sections (if any) "—But how, if they are not any, could they be indicated by a mark however convenient ?

"The Examiners will have regard to the style and method of the candidate's answers, and will give credit for excellence *in these respects*."

Have you begun to detect the two main vices of Jargon ? The first is that it uses circumlocution rather than short straight speech. It says "In the case of John Jenkins deceased, the coffin " when it means "John Jenkins' coffin " : and its yea is not yea, neither is its nay nay : but its answer is in the affirmative or in the negative, as the foolish and superfluous " case " may be. The second vice is that it habitually chooses vague woolly abstract nouns rather than concrete ones. I shall have something to say by-and-by

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about the concrete noun, and how you should ever be struggling for it whether in prose or in verse. For the moment I content myself with advising you, if you would write masculine English, never to forget the old tag of your Latin Grammar :—

“ Masculine will only be  
Things that you can touch and see.”

But since these lectures are meant to be a course in First Aid to writing, I will content myself with one or two extremely rough rules : yet I shall be disappointed if you do not find them serviceable.

The first is : Whenever in your reading you come across one of these words, *case*, *instance*, *character*, *nature*, *condition*, *persuasion*, *degree*—whenever in writing your pen betrays you to one or another of them—pull yourself up and take thought. If it be “ case ” (I choose it as Jargon’s dearest child—“ in Heaven yclept Metonymy ”) turn to the dictionary, if you will, and seek out what meaning can be derived from *casus*, its Latin ancestor : then try how, with a little trouble, you can extricate yourself from that case. The odds are you will feel like a butterfly who has discarded his chrysalis.

Here are some specimens to try your hand on :—

(1) “ All those tears which inundated Lord Hugh Cecil’s head were dry in the case of Mr. Harold Cox.”

Poor Mr. Cox ! left gasping in his aquarium !

(2) [From a cigar-merchant] In any case, let us send you a case on approval.”

(3) It is contended that Consols have fallen in consequence : but such is by no means the case.”

“ *Such*,” by the way, is another spoilt child of Jargon, especially in Committee’s Rules—“ Co-opted mem-

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bers may be eligible as such ; such members to continue to serve for such time as ”—and so on.

(4) “ Even in the purely Celtic areas, only in two or three cases do the Bishops bear Celtic names.”

For “ cases ” read “ dioceses.”

*Instance.* “ In most instances the players were below their form.”

But what were they playing at ? Instances ?

*Character—Nature.* “ There can be no doubt that the accident was caused through the dangerous nature of the spot, the hidden character of the by-road, and the utter absence of any warning or danger signal.”

Mark the foggy wording of it all ! And yet the man hit something and broke his neck ! Contrast that explanation with the verdict of a coroner’s jury in the West of England on a drowned postman—“ We find that deceased met his death by an act of God, caused by sudden overflowing of the river Walkham and helped out by the scandalous neglect of the way-wardens.”

“ The Aintree course is notoriously of a trying nature.”

“ On account of its light character, purity, and age, Usher’s whiskey is a whiskey that will agree with you.”

*Order.* “ The mésalliance was of a pronounced order.”

*Condition.* “ He was conveyed to his place of residence in an intoxicated condition.”

“ He was carried home drunk.”

*Quality and Section.* “ Mr. —, exhibiting no less than five works, all of a superior quality, figures prominently in the oil section.”

—This was written of an exhibition of pictures.

*Degree.* “A singular degree of rarity prevails in the earlier editions of this romance.”

That is Jargon. In prose it runs simply “The earlier editions of this romance are rare”—or “are very rare”—or even (if you believe what I take leave to doubt) “are singularly rare”; which should mean that they are rarer than the editions of any other work in the world.

Now what I ask you to consider about these quotations is that in each the writer was using Jargon to shirk prose, palming off periphrases upon us when with a little trouble he could have gone straight to the point. “A singular degree of rarity prevails,” “the accident was caused through the dangerous nature of the spot,” “but such is by no means the case.” We may not be capable of much; but we can all write better than that, if we take a little trouble. In place of “the Aintree course is of a trying nature” we can surely say “Aintree is a trying course” or “the Aintree course is a trying one”—just that and nothing more.

Next, having trained yourself to keep a look-out for these worst offenders (and you will be surprised to find how quickly you get into the way of it), proceed to push your suspicions out among the whole cloudy host of abstract terms. “How excellent a thing is sleep,” sighed Sancho Panza; “it wraps a man round like a cloak”—an excellent example, by the way, of how to say a thing concretely: a Jargoneer would have said that “among the beneficent qualities of sleep its capacity for withdrawing the human consciousness from the contemplation of immediate circumstances may perhaps be accounted not the least remarkable.” How vile a thing—shall we say?—is the abstract noun! It wraps a man’s thoughts round like cotton wool.

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Here is a pretty little nest of specimens, found in the newspaper by Messrs. H. W. and F. G. Fowler, authors of that capital little book *The King's English* :—

“ One of the most important reforms mentioned in the rescript is the unification of the organisation of judicial institutions and the guarantee for all the tribunals of the independence necessary for securing to all classes of the community equality before the law.”

I do not dwell on the cacophony ; but, to convey a straightforward piece of news, might not the Editor as well employ a man to write :—

“ One of the most important reforms is that of the Courts, which need a uniform system and to be made independent. In this way only can men be assured that all are equal before the law.”

I think he might.

A day or two ago the musical critic of the *Standard* wrote this :—

### “ MR. LAMOND IN BEETHOVEN

Mr. Frederick Lamond, the Scottish pianist, as an interpreter of Beethoven has few rivals. At his second recital of the composer's works at Bechstein Hall on Saturday afternoon he again displayed a complete sympathy and understanding of his material that extracted the very essence of aesthetic and musical value from each selection he undertook. The delightful intimacy of his playing and his unusual force of individual expression are invaluable assets, which, allied to his technical brilliancy, enable him to achieve an artistic triumph. The two lengthy Variations in E flat major (Op. 35) and in D major, the latter on the Turkish March from *The Ruins of Athens*, when included in the same programme, require a master hand to provide

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continuity of interest. *To say that Mr. Lamond successfully avoided moments that might at times, in these works, have inclined to comparative disinterestedness, would be but a moderate way of expressing the remarkable fascination with which his versatile playing endowed them, but at the same time two of the sonatas given included a similar form of composition, and no matter how intellectually brilliant may be the interpretation, the extravagant use of a certain mode is bound in time to become somewhat ineffective. In the Three Sonatas, the E major (Op. 109), the A major (Op. 2), No. 2, and the C minor (Op. 111), Mr. Lamond signalised his perfect insight into the composer's varying moods."*

Will you not agree with me that here is no writing, here is no prose, here is not even English, but merely a flux of words to the pen?

Here again is a string, a concatenation—say, rather, a tiara—of gems of purest ray serene from the dark unfathomed caves of a Scottish newspaper :—

“ The Chinese viewpoint, as indicated in this letter, may not be without interest to your readers, because it evidently is suggestive of more than an academic attempt to explain an unpleasant aspect of things which, if allowed to materialise, might suddenly culminate in disaster resembling the Chang-Sha riots. It also ventures to illustrate incidents having their inception in recent premature endeavours to accelerate the development of Protestant missions in China ; but we would hope for the sake of the interests involved that what my correspondent describes as ‘ the irresponsible ruffian element ’ may be known by their various religious designations only within very restricted areas.”

Well, the Chinese have given it up, poor fellows ! and are asking the Christians—as to-day's newspapers in-

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form us—to pray for them. Do you wonder? But that is, or was, the Chinese “viewpoint”—and what a willow-pattern viewpoint! Observe its delicacy. It does not venture to interest or be interesting; merely to be “not without interest.” But it does “venture to illustrate incidents”—which, for a viewpoint, is brave enough: and this illustration “is suggestive of more than an academic attempt to explain an unpleasant aspect of things which, if allowed to materialise, might suddenly culminate.” *What* materialises? The unpleasant aspect? or the things? Grammar says the “things,” “things which if allowed to materialise.” But things are materialised already, and as a condition of their being things. It must be the aspect, then, that materialises. But, if so, it is also the aspect that culminates, and an aspect, however unpleasant, can hardly do that, or at worst cannot culminate in anything resembling the Chang-Sha riots. . . . I give it up.

SIR ARTHUR QUILLER-COUCH

## ON NOTHING

### THE INTRODUCTION

It is surprising that, while such trifling matters employ the masterly pens of the present age, the great and noble subject of this essay should have passed totally neglected; and the rather, as it is a subject to which the genius of many of those writers who have unsuccessfully applied themselves to politics, religion, etc., is most peculiarly adapted.

Perhaps their unwillingness to handle what is of such importance may not improperly be ascribed to their modesty; though they may not be remarkably addicted to this vice on every occasion. Indeed I have heard it predicated of some, whose assurance in

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treating other subjects hath been sufficiently notable, that they have blushed at this. For such is the awe with which this Nothing inspires mankind, that I believe it is generally apprehended of many persons of very high character among us, that were title, power, or riches to allure them, they would stick at it.

But, whatever be the reason, certain it is, that except a hardy wit in the reign of Charles II, none ever hath dared to write on this subject : I mean openly and avowedly ; for it must be confessed that most of our modern authors, however foreign the matter which they endeavour to treat may seem at their first setting out, they generally bring the work to this in the end. I hope, however, this attempt will not be imputed to me as an act of immodesty ; since I am convinced there are many persons in this kingdom who are persuaded of my fitness for what I have undertaken. But as talking of a man's self is generally suspected to arise from vanity, I shall, without any more excuse or preface, proceed to my essay.

### SECTION I

#### OF THE ANTIQUITY OF NOTHING

There is nothing falser than that old proverb which (like many other falsehoods) is in everyone's mouth:—

“ Ex nihilo nihil fit.”

Thus translated by Shakespeare, in *Lear* :—

“ Nothing can come of nothing.”

Whereas, in fact, from Nothing proceeds everything. And this is a truth confessed by the philosophers of all sects : the only point in controversy between them being, whether Something made the world out of Nothing, or Nothing out of Something. A matter not much worth debating at present, since either will

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equally serve our turn. Indeed, the wits of all ages seem to have ranged themselves on each side of this question, as their genius tended more or less to the spiritual or material substance. For those of the more spiritual species have inclined to the former, and those whose genius hath partaken more of the chief properties of matter, such as solidity, thickness, &c., have embraced the latter.

But whether Nothing was the *artifex* or *materies* only, it is plain in either case, it will have a right to claim to itself the origination of all things.

And farther, the great antiquity of Nothing is apparent from its being so visible in the account we have of the beginning of every nation. This is very plainly to be discovered in the first pages, and sometimes books, of all general historians ; and, indeed, the study of this important subject fills up the whole life of an antiquary, it being always at the bottom of his inquiry, and is commonly at last discovered by him with infinite labour and pains.

### SECTION II

#### OF THE NATURE OF NOTHING

Another falsehood which we must detect in the pursuit of this essay is an assertion, “ That no one can have an idea of Nothing ” : but men who thus confidently deny us this idea either grossly deceive themselves, or would impose a downright cheat on the world : for, so far from having none, I believe there are few who have not many ideas of it ; though perhaps they may mistake them for the idea of Something.

For instance, is there anyone who hath not an idea of immaterial substance ? Now what is immaterial substance, more than Nothing ? But here we are artfully deceived by the use of words : for, were we to ask another what idea he had of immaterial matter,

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or unsubstantial substance, the absurdity of affirming it to be Something would shock him, and he would immediately reply it was Nothing.

Some persons perhaps will say, "Then we have no idea of it"; but, as I can support the contrary by such undoubted authority, I shall, instead of trying to confute such idle opinions, proceed to show; first, what Nothing is; secondly, I shall disclose the various kinds of Nothing, and lastly shall prove its great dignity, and that it is the end of everything.

As it is extremely hard to define Nothing in positive terms, I shall therefore do it in negative. Nothing then is not Something. And here I must object to a third error concerning it, which is, that it is in no place; which is an indirect way of depriving it of its existence; whereas indeed it possesses the greatest and noblest place on this earth, viz. the human brain. But indeed this mistake had been sufficiently refuted by many very wise men, who, having spent their whole lives in contemplation and pursuit of Nothing, have at last gravely concluded—*that there is Nothing in this world.*

Farther, as Nothing is not Something, so everything which is not Something is Nothing; and wherever Something is not Nothing is: a very large allowance in its favour, as must appear to persons well skilled in human affairs.

For instance, when a bladder is full of wind it is full of something; but when that is let out, we aptly say there is nothing in it.

The same may be as justly asserted of a man as of a bladder. However well he may be bedaubed with lace, or with title, yet, if he have not something in him, we may predicate the same of him as of an empty bladder.

But if we cannot reach an adequate knowledge of the true essence of Nothing, no more than we can of

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matter, let us, in imitation of the experimental philosophers, examine some of its properties or accidents.

And here we shall see the infinite advantages which Nothing hath over Something ; for, while the latter is confined to one sense, or two perhaps at the most, Nothing is the object of them all.

For, first, Nothing may be seen, as is plain from the relation of persons who have recovered from high fevers, and perhaps may be suspected from some (at least) of those who have seen apparitions, both on earth and in the clouds. Nay, I have often heard it confessed by men, when asked what they saw at such a place and time, that they saw Nothing. Admitting then there are two sights, viz. a first and second sight, according to the firm belief of some, Nothing must be allowed to have a very large share of the first, and as to the second, it hath it all entirely to itself.

Secondly, Nothing may be heard, of which the same proofs may be given as of the foregoing. The Argive mentioned by Horace is a strong instance of this :—

“ Fuit haud ignobilis Argis,  
Qui se credebat miros audire tragoedos  
In vacuo laetus sessor plausorque theatro.”

That Nothing may be tasted and smelt is not only known to persons of delicate palates and nostrils. How commonly do we hear that such a thing smells or tastes of nothing ! The latter I have heard asserted of a dish compounded of five or six savoury ingredients. And as to the former, I remember an elderly gentlewoman who had a great antipathy to the smell of apples, who, upon discovering that an idle boy had fastened some mellow apple to her tail, contracted a habit of smelling them whenever that boy came within her sight, though there were then none within a mile of her.

Lastly, feeling : and sure if any sense seems more

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particularly the object of matter only, which must be allowed to be Something, this doth. Nay, I have heard it asserted, and with a colour of truth, of several persons, that they can feel nothing but a cudgel. Notwithstanding which, some have felt the motions of the spirit, and others have felt very bitterly the misfortunes of their friends, without endeavouring to relieve them. Now these seem two plain instances that Nothing is an object of this sense. Nay, I have heard a surgeon declare, while he was cutting off a patient's leg, that *he was sure he felt Nothing*.

Nothing is as well the object of our passions as our senses. Thus there are many who love Nothing, some who hate Nothing, and some who fear Nothing, &c.

We have already mentioned three of the properties of a noun to belong to Nothing ; we shall find the fourth likewise to be as justly claimed by it, and that Nothing is as often the object of the understanding as of the senses.

Indeed, some have imagined that knowledge, with the adjective *human* placed before it, is another word for Nothing. And one of the wisest men in the world declared he knew Nothing.

But, without carrying it so far, this I believe may be allowed, that it is at least possible for a man to know Nothing. And whoever hath read over many works of our ingenious moderns, with proper attention and emolument, will, I believe, confess that, if he understand them right, he understands Nothing.

This is a secret not known to all readers, and want of this knowledge hath occasioned much puzzling ; for where a book or chapter or paragraph hath seemed to the reader to contain Nothing, his modesty hath sometimes persuaded him that the true meaning of the author hath escaped him, instead of concluding, as in reality the fact was, that the author in the said book, &c., did truly and bona fide mean Nothing.

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I remember once, at the table of a person of great eminence, and one no less distinguished by superiority of wit than fortune, when a very dark passage was read out of a poet famous for being so sublime that he is often out of the sight of his reader, some persons present declared they did not understand the meaning. The gentleman himself, casting his eye over the performance, testified a surprise at the dullness of his company, seeing Nothing could, he said, possibly be plainer than the meaning of the passage which they stuck at. This set all of us to puzzling again, but with like success ; we frankly owned we could not find it out, and desired he would explain it. " Explain it ! " said the gentleman, " why, he means Nothing."

In fact, this mistake arises from a too vulgar error among persons unacquainted with the mystery of writing, who imagine it impossible that a man should sit down to write without any meaning at all ! whereas, in reality, nothing is more common : for, not to instance in myself, who have confessedly set down to write this essay with Nothing in my head, or, which is much the same thing, to write about Nothing, it may be incontestably proved, *ab effectu*, that Nothing is commoner among the moderns. The inimitable author of a preface to the Posthumous Eclogues of a late ingenious young gentleman, says, " There are men who sit down to write what they think, and others to think what they shall write. But indeed there is a third and much more numerous sort, who never think either before they sit down or afterwards, and who, when they produce on paper what was before in their heads, are sure to produce Nothing."

Thus we have endeavoured to demonstrate the nature of Nothing, by showing first, definitively, *what it is not* ; and, secondly, by describing *what it is*. The next thing therefore proposed is to show its various kinds.

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Now some imagine these several kinds differ in name only. But, without endeavouring to confute so absurd an opinion, especially as these different kinds of Nothing occur frequently in the best authors, I shall content myself with setting them down, and leave it to the determination of the distinguished reader, whether it is probable, or indeed possible, that they should all convey one and the same meaning.

These are, Nothing *per se* Nothing ; Nothing at all ; Nothing in the least ; Nothing in nature ; Nothing in the world ; Nothing in the whole world ; Nothing in the whole universal world. And perhaps many other of which we say—Nothing.

### SECTION III

OF THE DIGNITY OF NOTHING ; AND AN ENDEAVOUR  
TO PROVE THAT IT IS THE END AS WELL AS BEGIN-  
NING OF ALL THINGS

Nothing contains so much dignity as Nothing. Ask an infamous worthless nobleman (if any such be) in what his dignity consists ? It may not be perhaps consistent with his dignity to give you an answer, but suppose he should be willing to condescend so far, what could he in effect say ? Should he say he had it from his ancestors, I apprehend a lawyer would oblige him to prove that the virtues to which his dignity was annexed descended to him. If he claims it as inherent in the title, might he not be told that a title originally implied dignity, as it implied the presence of those virtues to which dignity is inseparably annexed ; but that no implication will fly in the face of downright positive proof to the contrary. In short, to examine no farther, since his endeavour to derive it from any other fountain would be equally impotent, his dignity arises from Nothing, and in reality is Nothing. Yet,

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that this dignity really exists, that it glares in the eyes of men, and produces much good to the person who wears it, is, I believe, incontestable.

Perhaps this may appear in the following syllogism.

The respect paid to men on account of their titles is paid at least to the supposal of their superior virtues and abilities, or it is paid to Nothing.

But when a man is a notorious knave or fool it is impossible there should be any such supposal.

The conclusion is apparent.

Now, that no man is ashamed of either paying or receiving this respect I wonder not, since the great importance of Nothing seems, I think, to be pretty apparent: but that they should deny the Deity worshipped, and endeavour to represent Nothing as Something, is more worthy reprehension. This is a fallacy extremely common. I have seen a fellow, whom all the world knew to have Nothing in him, not only pretend to Something himself, but supported in that pretension by others who have been less liable to be deceived. Now whence can this proceed but from their being ashamed of Nothing? A modesty very peculiar to this age.

But, notwithstanding all such disguises and deceit, a man must have very little discernment who can live very long in courts, or populous cities, without being convinced of the great dignity of Nothing; and though he should, through corruption or necessity, comply with the vulgar worship and adulation, he will know to what it is paid; namely, to Nothing.

The most astonishing instance of this respect, so frequently paid to Nothing, is when it is paid (if I may so express myself) to something less than Nothing; when the person who receives it is not only void of the quality for which he is respected, but is in reality notoriously guilty of the vices directly opposite to the virtues whose applause he receives. This is, indeed,

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the highest degree of Nothing, or (if I may be allowed the word) the Nothingest of all Nothings.

Here it is to be known that respect may be aimed at Something and really light on Nothing. For instance, when mistaking certain things called gravity, canting, blustering, ostentation, pomp, and such like, for wisdom, piety, magnanimity, charity, true greatness, &c., we give to the former the honour and reverence due to the latter. Not that I would be understood so far to discredit my subject as to insinuate that gravity, canting, &c., are really Nothing ; on the contrary, there is much more reason to suspect (if we judge from the practice of the world) that wisdom, piety, and other virtues have a good title to that name. But we do not, in fact, pay our respect to the former, but to the latter : in other words, we pay it to that which is not, and consequently pay it to Nothing.

So far then for the dignity of the subject on which I am treating. I am now to show that Nothing is the end as well as beginning of all things.

That everything is resolvable, and will be resolved into its first principles, will be, I believe, readily acknowledged by all philosophers. As, therefore, we have sufficiently proved the world came from Nothing, it follows that it will likewise end in the same : but as I am writing to a nation of Christians I have no need to be prolix on this head ; since every one of my readers, by his faith, acknowledges that the world is to have an end, *i.e.* is to come to Nothing.

And, as Nothing is the end of the world, so is it of everything in the world. Ambition, the greatest, highest, noblest, finest, most heroic and godlike of all passions, what doth it end in ?—Nothing. What did Alexander, Caesar, and all the rest of that heroic band, who have plundered and massacred so many millions, obtain by all their care, labour, pain, fatigue, and danger ?—Could they speak for themselves must they

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not own that the end of all their pursuit was Nothing? Nor is this the end of private ambition only. What is become of that proud mistress of the world—the *Caput triumphati orbis*—that Rome of which her own flatterers so liberally prophesied the immortality? In what hath all her glory ended? Surely in Nothing.

Again, what is the end of avarice? Not power, or pleasure, as some think, for the miser will part with a shilling for neither: not ease or happiness, for the more he attains of what he desires, the more uneasy and miserable he is. If every good in this world was put to him, he could not say he pursued one. Shall we say then he pursues misery only? That surely would be contradictory to the first principles of human nature. May we not therefore, nay, must we not confess, that he aims at Nothing? especially if he be himself unable to tell us what is the end of all this bustle and hurry, this watching and toiling, this self-denial and self-constraint?

It will not, I apprehend, be sufficient for him to plead that his design is to amass a large fortune, which he never can nor will use himself, nor would willingly quit to any other person: unless he can show us some substantial good which this fortune is to produce, we shall certainly be justified in concluding that his end is the same with that of ambition.

The great Mr. Hobbes so plainly saw this, that as he was an enemy to that notable immaterial substance which we have here handled, and therefore unwilling to allow it the large province we have contended for, he advanced a very strange doctrine and asserted truly,—That in all these grand pursuits the means themselves were the end proposed, viz. to ambition—plotting, fighting, danger, difficulty, and such like: to avarice—cheating, starving, watching, and the numberless painful arts by which this passion proceeds.

However easy it may be to demonstrate the absurd-

ity of this opinion it will be needless to my purpose, since, if we are driven to confess that the means are the only end attained, I think we must likewise confess that the end proposed is absolutely Nothing.

As I have shown the end of our two greatest and noblest pursuits, one or other of which engages almost every individual of the busy part of mankind, I shall not tire the reader with carrying him through all the rest, since I believe the same conclusion may be easily drawn from them all.

I shall therefore finish this Essay with an inference, which aptly enough suggests itself from what hath been said : seeing that such is its dignity and importance, and that it is really the end of all those things which are supported with so much pomp and solemnity, and looked on with such respect and esteem, surely it becomes a wise man to regard Nothing with the utmost awe and adoration ; to pursue it with all his parts and pains ; and to sacrifice to it his ease, his innocence, and his present happiness. To which noble pursuit we have this great incitement, that we may assure ourselves of never being cheated or deceived in the end proposed. The virtuous, wise, and learned may then be unconcerned at all the changes of ministries and of government ; since they may be well satisfied, that while ministers of state are rogues themselves, and have inferior knavish tools to bribe and reward, true virtue, wisdom, learning, wit, and integrity, will most certainly bring their possessors—Nothing. HENRY FIELDING

## MODERNISING SHAKESPEARE

IN the last issue of *The Observer* I quoted a letter from a correspondent in Derby who feels that Shakespeare's unpopularity, where he is unpopular, is due to his archaic language. He urged me to find " the right

man " to make " a free translation " of the plays into modern prose. He complacently contemplated the sacrifice of " some passages of pure poetry," on the ground that these might better be read in a study. He made an excellent point by insisting that the popularity of Shakespeare in Germany must be due to the modern language in the translations. Mr. Lawrence Langner, a director of the Theatre Guild of New York, made this point, too, some years ago, in an American magazine. I regard my correspondent's request as a shocking sign of the illiteracy of our time. Millions of people have, at great expense, acquired every instrument, except one, for the appreciation of literature. That one is a brain. I shall not join the ranks of those persons who, professing to be sensible men of the world, habitually decry the pursuit of culture. If there is any purpose in human life, part of that purpose, surely, is the production of better people than we now possess ; that is to say, people with ambitions and natures and perceptions that are finer than ours. If we are capable of altering our lives, and I believe that we are, we must wish to change them for the better : no one but an incorrigible misanthropist will acknowledge a wish to make them worse. The question of better or worse is largely, but not entirely, a matter of taste. There are eccentrics who think that it is better to be ignorant than to be educated, and they can produce entertaining arguments in support of their singular belief. It is enough, however, that the overwhelming desire of mankind denies their plea. Most passionately we wish to be educated and more deeply appreciative of the goodness and loveliness of the world, and no amount of argument, however witty and wise it may be, will discourage us. I am amazed when I hear people say that they have no wish to live long. If anyone were able to assure me that I should live for a thousand years I should leap with joy. But

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my ten centuries would end in gloom if I were to find at their conclusion that human affairs were no better than they were at the beginning. Some people, and I can understand them, are indifferent to what is called worldly welfare. Their hopes are set on another place. But I see no reason why we should not make the best of both, or all, worlds. A saint who is satisfied with a sty here will make a sad exhibition of himself in paradise. I can imagine the archangels looking down their noses at the holiest man who tries to live in a glorified spirit with no other experience than an earthly lot passed in misery and dirt.

. . . . .

The human being who will not try to rise above his environment is not worth one damn. The sooner he dies and disappears from divine and human knowledge, the better for everybody. A man who makes the least of himself is bad, but one who makes the least of the world is worse. I shall not, therefore, spend further space in argument with those persons who, because they are pious or because they are pessimists, are content to disregard the development of human affairs, nor shall I waste time in arguing about the nature of good or bad. Those who surmise that it takes all sorts to make a world seem to me excessively tolerant. There are several sorts with whom I could very well dispense, and I shall shed no tears if they all catastrophically disappear. I have no wish for a world which includes in its population persons such as those who lately murdered the Lindbergh baby, and if anyone can assure me that the gin-sodden, laugh-baby-laugh-for-the-last-time type is about to vanish for ever, I shall feel greatly exhilarated. Most of us have a fair working knowledge of what is good and what is bad, and that working knowledge is sufficient for my present purpose. We are generally agreed that it is good to be educated and bad to be illiterate. The majority

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of people prefer to be cultured rather than to be uncultured. And the object of our lives, if we have one, is to increase the number of reasonable people, that is to say, people with able and balanced and civilised minds, and to decrease the number of unreasonable people. The contemporary vice is the assumption that the lowest common denominator of life is to be the measure of life for everybody. When a man with a maimed mind walks into the National Gallery and asserts that he cannot see anything in all this art, we may pity him. We ought not to admire or imitate him. The fact that he cannot see anything in a Botticelli is a condemnation, not of Botticelli, as the neo-democrats seem to suppose, but of him. If a man is unable to understand Shakespeare unless he is translated into the language of the Hollywood talkie, there is not, as my correspondent from Derby imagines, something seriously wrong with Shakespeare, but everything that can be wrong with the man. Periodically, someone proposes to modernise the Book of Common Prayer on the ground that "the common people" cannot understand it. There is wisdom in the suggestion that where a word, such as "prevent," has lost the sense in which it is used in the Prayer Book, it should be altered. We do not wish to have our congregations supposing that a petition that God should prevent us in all our ways is to be understood in the sense that He is to stop us from doing anything. That would be to identify the Almighty with the mother who told her daughter to go upstairs and see what Willie was doing, and tell him not to do it. But to agree to that alteration is vastly different from agreeing to a suggestion that the entire book shall be turned into the language of a picture paper. Too many people, when they find the crowd falling from a standard, are in a great hurry to lower the standard.

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Many persons believe that the reason why Shakespearean speeches seem archaic to some people is because the practice of daily reading in the Bible has almost ceased. The Authorised Version is written in the language in which the plays are written, and any person who is at ease with the Bible is at ease with Shakespeare. But is Shakespeare unpopular? I am assured by persons presumably informed and intelligent that Dickens is no longer read. They cannot themselves read him. There is no author, alive or dead, who can be read by everybody, and we may, therefore, disregard dislikes in this respect as personal idiosyncrasies. When, however, I am assured that scarcely anybody reads Dickens, I wonder to myself in what world my informants live. The Librarian of Croydon recently reported that Dickens is still the most popular author whose works are on his shelves, and I suspect that a similar report can be made by nearly every librarian in Great Britain. The history of the Old Vic. and the Shakespeare Theatre, at Stratford-on-Avon, and the extraordinary popularity of the Stratford Players during their recent visit to the United States, prove that our poet keeps his hold on many affections. We do not expect people who have been brought up on celluloid to like anything which makes a demand on their minds, for they live chiefly on febrile sensations. Trotsky, describing Kerensky, said of him that he had "that kind of eloquence which operates neither upon mind nor will, but upon the nerves." He might have been describing a Hollywood talkie. The confirmed film-fan, who has never seriously seen anything but moving-pictures, is incapable of appreciating fine speech. He has not been trained to understand great language: he has been trained to like mob-speech; headline stuff; captions. It is childish to suppose that half-educated or illiterate people can, without any training, appreciate the finest

expressions of the human imagination. It is easier to grasp the intellectual content of *Peg's Paper* than of *Hamlet*, for the obvious reason that there is more mind in *Hamlet* than in *Peg's Paper* to be grasped. Men of genius are not instantly understood even by intelligent people. We flatter ourselves and belittle great minds when we expect to understand at once all that they have to say.

What puzzles me is to understand why Shakespeare's language, which was not archaic to my generation, should seem archaic to my correspondent's. I am still short of fifty. The difference, therefore, between his age and mine is not deep and wide. Yet he assures me that his contemporaries are puzzled "by the unfamiliar idiom, by words and expressions not in common use to-day." This is a complaint which has more than once been made to me about any author who worked prior to the year 1920 by a very able lad of less than twenty. He wants things to be "quick." Hurry, hurry, hurry, he says. Intellectually he resembles those youths who tear about on motor-bicycles. Oil fairly drips from them. Their lustreless, lank hair is offensive to heaven. Their hands and their nails are so saturated with oil that no soap will ever remove its traces. They smell horribly! . . . Their single object in life seems to be to go from A to B and from B back to A in ten seconds less than the time taken by any other person. They see little of A, less of B, and nothing at all of the country between them. Invite one of these smelly mechanics to witness a performance of *Hamlet* or *Twelfth Night* and the poor fellow will be utterly moidered: he will miss the smell of petrol. But surely it is a piece of conceit as well as folly to imagine that only those things which have occurred in our own time are of interest or value. To think that the work of mankind throughout the

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past is of no importance to us is to be fatuously vain. It is also to condemn oneself to oblivion immediately one's generation has ceased to exist. For we, too, will soon be part of the past. If we have nothing better to leave to our descendants than the exhausted fumes of petrol, no one will wish to remember us.

. . . . .

If we are to "translate" Shakespeare or any other author into topical terms, each generation must have a new adaptation ; for the topical tongue of to-day is the dead language of to-morrow. Many of the idioms of the War are already unintelligible to persons of twenty whose own "modern" speech will seem faded to their grandchildren. We can more safely trust Shakespeare to make himself understood by a long series of generations than we can trust "translators," however expert they may be, to interpret him. Let us try to "modernise" Hamlet's first soliloquy :—

" O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,  
Thaw and resolve itself into a dew !  
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd  
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter ! O God ! God !  
How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable  
Seem to me all the uses of this world !  
Fie on't ! ah fie ! 'tis an unweeded garden,  
That grows to seed : things rank and gross in  
nature  
Possess it merely. That it should come to this !  
But two months dead ! nay, not so much, not two :  
So excellent a king, that was, to this,  
Hyperion to a satyr : so loving to my mother.  
That he might not beteem the winds of heaven  
Visit her face too roughly. . . . "

Those are Shakespeare's "unintelligible" lines. Here follows an attempt to render them topically intelligible :—

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"This is a damned mess ! It's a pity I can't sweat myself into a dew. For two pins I'd put my head in a gas-oven, only I haven't the nerve for it. Blast ! I *am* fed-up ! Absolutely ! Fed to the teeth ! There isn't a damn' thing that's worth a damn ! I *am* fed-up. Fancy the mater marrying Uncle Claudius when dad hasn't been dead for a couple of months ! Feeds you up, that does ! What she can see in Uncle Claud I *can't* think ! Damned old beaver ! I mean to say, fancy any woman marrying a chap like that when she's lived with a chap like my dad ! I mean to say . . . damn it *all* ! Dad was very fond of her, I mean to say, he was potty about her. Absolutely batty about her ! And then, before he's been dead two months, she marries again, and marries Uncle Claudius ! It's damned bad taste, and I'm absolutely fed-up. That's what I am ! Fed-up. To the teeth. . . ."

If anybody supposes that that is an improvement on Shakespeare, or that it is likely to be intelligible for long, he supposes a vain thing.

My correspondent forgets that *Hamlet* is the expression of *Shakespeare's* mind. It is not the expression of *anybody's* mind. To "translate" his work, therefore, is to allow the "translator" to express *his* mind instead of Shakespeare's. We may doubt whether a man who lays impious hands on the work of a genius has a mind to express, or one that many persons wish to have expressed, but assuming that he has, he will do better to express it in his own work than in another person's. If Shakespeare's speech is not intelligible, the fault, dear Brutus, is in ourselves, not in him, and we will do well to alter ourselves and leave him alone.

ST. JOHN ERVINE

## TRAVELLERS

It must have been observed, by many a peripatetic philosopher, that Nature has set up, by her own unquestionable authority, certain boundaries and fences to circumscribe the discontent of man ; she has effected her purpose in the quietest and easiest manner by laying him under almost insuperable obligations to work out his ease, and to sustain his sufferings at home. It is there only that she has provided him with the most suitable objects to partake of his happiness, and bear a part of that burden which, in all countries and ages, has ever been too heavy for one pair of shoulders. 'Tis true we are endued with an imperfect power of spreading our happiness sometimes beyond *her* limits ; but 'tis so ordered that, from the want of languages, connections, dependencies, and, from the difference in educations, customs, and habits, we lie under so many impediments in communicating our sensations out of our own sphere, as often amount to a total impossibility.

It will always follow hence that the balance of sentimental commerce is always against the expatriated adventurer : he must buy what he has little occasion for, at their own price ;—his conversation will seldom be taken in exchange for theirs without a large discount—and this, by the by, eternally driving him into the hands of more equitable brokers, for such conversation as he can find it requires no great spirit of divination to guess at his party.

This brings me to my point, and naturally leads me (if the see-saw of this *désobligeant*<sup>1</sup> will but let me get on) into the efficient as well as final causes of travelling.

Your idle people, that leave their native country,

<sup>1</sup> A French chaise holding only one person.

## TRAVELLERS

and go abroad for some reason or reasons which may be derived from one of these general causes :—

Infirmary of body,  
Imbecility of mind, or  
Inevitable necessity.

The two first include all those who travel by land or by water, labouring with pride, curiosity, vanity, or spleen, subdivided and combined *ad infinitum*.

The third class includes the whole army of peregrine martyrs ; more especially those travellers who set out upon their travels with the benefit of the clergy, either as delinquents, travelling under the direction of governors recommended by the magistrate ;—or young gentlemen, transported by the cruelty of parents and guardians, and travelling under the direction of governors recommended by Oxford, Aberdeen, and Glasgow.

There is a fourth class, but their number is so small that they would not deserve a distinction, were it not necessary, in a work of this nature, to observe the greatest precision and nicety, to avoid a confusion of character : and these men I speak of are such as cross the seas, and sojourn in a land of strangers, with a view of saving money, for various reasons, and upon various pretences ; but, as they might also save others a great deal of unnecessary trouble by saving their money at home,—and, as their reasons for travelling are the least complex of any other species of emigrants, I shall distinguish these gentlemen by the name of

### Simple Travellers.

Thus the whole circle of travellers may be reduced to the following heads :—

Idle Travellers,  
Inquisitive Travellers,  
Lying Travellers,

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Proud Travellers,  
Vain Travellers,  
Splenetic Travellers ;

then follow

The Travellers of Necessity,  
The Delinquent and Felonious Traveller,  
The Unfortunate and Innocent Traveller,  
The Simple Traveller,

and last of all (if you please) The Sentimental Traveller (meaning thereby myself), who have travelled, and of which I am now sitting down to give an account,—as much out of *Necessity*, and the *besoin de voyager*, as any one in the class.

I am well aware, at the same time, as both my travels and observations will be altogether of a different cast from any of my forerunners, that I might have insisted upon a whole niche entirely to myself ;—but I should break in upon the confines of the *Vain Traveller*, in wishing to draw attention towards me, till I have some better grounds for it than the mere *Novelty of my Vehicle*. It is sufficient for my reader, if he has been a Traveller himself, that, with study and reflection hereupon, he may be able to determine his own place and rank in the catalogue ;—it will be one step towards knowing himself, as it is great odds but he retains some tincture and resemblance of what he imbibed or carried out, to the present hour.

The man who first transplanted the grape of Burgundy to the Cape of Good Hope (observe he was a Dutchman) never dreamt of drinking the same wine at the Cape that the same grape produced upon the French mountains,—he was too phlegmatic for that ;—but, undoubtedly, he expected to drink some sort of vinous liquor ;—but whether good, bad, or indifferent,—he knew enough of this world to know that

it did not depend upon his choice, but that what is generally called *chance* was to decide his success : however, he hoped for the best ; and in these hopes, by an intemperate confidence in the fortitude of his head, and the depth of his discretion, *Mynheer* might possibly overset both in his new vineyard : and, by discovering his nakedness, become a laughing stock to his people.

Even so it fares with the poor Traveller, sailing and posting through the politer kingdoms of the globe, in pursuit of knowledge and improvements.

Knowledge and improvements are to be got by sailing and posting for that purpose ; but whether useful knowledge and improvements are all a lottery ;—and, even where the adventurer is successful, the acquired stock must be used with caution and sobriety, to turn to any profit :—but, as the chances run prodigiously the other way both as to the acquisition and application, I am of opinion that a man would act as wisely if he could prevail upon himself to live contented without foreign knowledge or foreign improvements, especially if he lives in a country that has no absolute want of either ;—and, indeed, much grief of heart has it oft and many a time cost me when I have observed how many a foul step the Inquisitive Traveller has measured, to see sights and look into discoveries, all which, as Sancho Panza said to Don Quixote, they might have seen dry-shod at home. It is an age so full of light that there is scarce a country or corner of Europe whose beams are not crossed and interchanged with others.—Knowledge, in most of its branches, and in most affairs, is like music in an Italian street, whereof those may partake who pay nothing.—But there is no nation under Heaven,—and God is my record (before whose tribunal I must one day come and give an account of this work)—that I do not speak it vauntingly,—but there is no nation under

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Heaven abounding with more variety of learning,—where the sciences may be more fitly woo'd, or more surely won, than here,—where Art is encouraged, and will soon rise high,—where Nature (take her altogether) has so little to answer for,—and, to close all, where there is more wit and variety of character to feed the mind with !—Where then, my dear countrymen, are you going ?—

. . . We are only looking at this chaise, said they.  
. . . Your most obedient servant, said I, skipping out of it, and pulling off my hat. . . . We were wondering, said one of them, who I found was an *Inquisitive Traveller*,—what could occasion its motion.  
. . . 'Twas the agitation said I, coolly, of writing a preface. . . . I never heard said the other, who was a *Simple Traveller*, of a preface wrote in a *désobligeant*.  
. . . It would have been better, said I, in a *vis-à-vis*.  
*As an Englishman does not travel to see Englishmen, I retired to my room.*

LAURENCE STERNE

## ON LYING IN BED

LYING in bed would be an altogether perfect and supreme experience if only one had a coloured pencil long enough to draw on the ceiling. This, however, is not generally a part of the domestic apparatus on the premises. I think myself that the thing might be managed with several pails of Aspinall and a broom. Only if one worked in a really sweeping and masterly way, and laid on the colour in great washes, it might drip down again on one's face in floods of rich and mingled colour like some strange fairy rain ; and that would have its disadvantages. I am afraid it would be necessary to stick to black and white in this form of artistic composition. To that purpose, indeed, the white ceiling would be of the greatest possible use ; in

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fact it is the only use I think of a white ceiling being put to.

But for the beautiful experiment of lying in bed I might never have discovered it. For years I have been looking for some blank spaces in a modern house to draw on. Paper is much too small for any really allegorical design ; as Cyrano de Bergerac says : “ Il me faut des géants.” But when I tried to find these fine clear spaces in the modern rooms such as we all live in I was continually disappointed. I found an endless pattern and complication of small objects hung like a curtain of fine links between me and my desire. I examined the walls ; I found them to my surprise to be already covered with wall-paper, and I found the wall-paper to be already covered with very uninteresting images, all bearing a ridiculous resemblance to each other. I could not understand why one arbitrary symbol (a symbol apparently entirely devoid of any religious or philosophical significance) should thus be sprinkled all over my nice walls like a sort of small-pox. The Bible must be referring to wall-papers, I think, when it says “ Use not vain repetitions, as the Gentiles do.” I found the Turkey carpet a mass of unmeaning colours, rather like the Turkish Empire, or like the sweetmeat called Turkish Delight. I do not exactly know what Turkish Delight really is ; but I suppose it is Macedonian Massacres. Everywhere that I went forlornly with my pencil or my paint brush, I found that others had unaccountably been before me, spoiling the walls, the curtains, and the furniture with their childish and barbaric designs.

Nowhere did I find a really clear space for sketching until this occasion when I prolonged beyond the proper limit the process of lying on my back in bed. Then the light of that white heaven broke upon my vision, that breadth of mere white which is indeed

almost the definition of Paradise, since it means purity and also means freedom. But alas ! like all heavens now that it is seen it is found to be unattainable ; it looks more austere and more distant than the blue sky outside the window. For my proposal to paint on it with the bristly end of a broom has been discouraged—never mind by whom ; by a person debarred from all political rights—and even my minor proposal to put the other end of the broom into the kitchen fire and turn it into charcoal has not been conceded. Yet I am certain that it was from persons in my position that all the original inspiration came for covering the ceilings of palaces and cathedrals with a riot of fallen angels or victorious gods. I am sure that it was only because Michael Angelo was engaged in the ancient and honourable occupation of lying in bed that he ever realised how the roof of the Sistine Chapel might be made into an awful imitation of a divine drama that could only be acted in the heavens.

The tone now commonly taken towards the practice of lying in bed is hypocritical and unhealthy. Of all the marks of modernity that seem to mean a kind of decadence, there is none more menacing and dangerous than the exaltation of very small and secondary matters of conduct at the expense of very great and primary ones, at the expense of eternal ties and tragic human morality. If there is one thing worse than the modern weakening of major morals it is the modern strengthening of minor morals. Thus it is considered more withering to accuse a man of bad taste than of bad ethics. Cleanliness is not next to godliness nowadays, for cleanliness is made an essential and godliness is regarded as an offence. A playwright can attack the institution of marriage so long as he does not misrepresent the manners of society, and I have met Ibsenite pessimists who thought it wrong to take beer but right to take prussic acid. Especially this is so in

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matters of hygiene ; notably such matters as lying in bed. Instead of being regarded, as it ought to be, as a matter of personal convenience and adjustment, it has come to be regarded by many as if it were a part of essential morals to get up early in the morning. It is upon the whole part of practical wisdom ; but there is nothing good about it or bad about its opposite.

Misers get up early in the morning ; and burglars, I am informed, get up the night before. It is the great peril of our society that all its mechanism may grow more fixed while its spirit grows more fickle. A man's minor actions and arrangements ought to be free, flexible, creative ; the things that should be unchangeable are his principles, his ideals. But with us the reverse is true ; our views change constantly ; but our lunch does not change. Now, I should like men to have strong and rooted conceptions, but as for their lunch, let them have it sometimes in the garden, sometimes in bed, sometimes on the roof, sometimes in the top of a tree. Let them argue from the same first principles, but let them do it in a bed, or a boat, or a balloon. This alarming growth of good habits really means a too great emphasis on those virtues which mere custom can ensure, it means too little emphasis on those virtues which custom can never quite ensure, sudden and splendid virtues of inspired pity or of inspired candour. If ever that abrupt appeal is made to us we may fail. A man can get used to getting up at five o'clock in the morning. A man cannot very well get used to being burnt for his opinions ; the first experiment is commonly fatal. Let us pay a little more attention to these possibilities of the heroic and the unexpected. I dare say that when I get out of this bed I shall do some deed of an almost terrible virtue.

For those who study the great art of lying in bed

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there is one emphatic caution to be added. Even for those who can do their work in bed (like journalists), still more for those whose work cannot be done in bed (as, for example, the professional harpooners of whales), it is obvious that the indulgence must be very occasional. But that is not the caution I mean. The caution is this : if you do lie in bed, be sure you do it without any reason or justification at all. I do not speak, of course, of the seriously sick. But if a healthy man lies in bed, let him do it without a rag of excuse ; then he will get up a healthy man. If he does it for some secondary hygienic reason, if he has some scientific explanation, he may get up a hypochondriac.

G. K. CHESTERTON

# ADVENTURES

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## THE STATE-COACH

AMONGST the presents carried out by our first embassy to China was a state-coach. It had been specially selected as a personal gift by George III ; but the exact mode of using it was an intense mystery to Pekin. The Ambassador, indeed (Lord Macartney), had made some imperfect explanations upon this point ; but, as his Excellency communicated these in a diplomatic whisper, at the very moment of his departure, the celestial intellect was very feebly illuminated, and it became necessary to call a Cabinet Council on the grand state question, " Where was the Emperor to sit ? " The hammer-cloth happened to be unusually gorgeous ; and partly on that consideration, but partly also because the box offered the most elevated seat, was nearest to the moon, and undeniably went foremost, it was resolved by acclamation that the box was the Imperial throne, and for the scoundrel who drove, he might sit where he could find a perch. The horses, therefore, being harnessed, solemnly his Imperial Majesty ascended his new English throne under a flourish of trumpets, having the First Lord of the Treasury on his right hand, and the Chief Jester on his left. Pekin gloried in the spectacle ; and in the whole flowery people, constructively present by representation, there was but one discontented person, and *that* was the coachman. This mutinous individual audaciously shouted, " Where am *I* to sit ? " But the Privy Council, incensed by his disloyalty, unanimously opened the door, and kicked him into the inside. He

had all the inside places to himself ; but such is the rapacity of ambition, that he was still dissatisfied. " I say," he cried out in an extempore petition, addressed to the Emperor through the window—" I say, how am I to catch hold of the reins ?"—" Anyhow," was the Imperial answer ; " don't trouble *me*, man, in my glory. How catch the reins ? Why, through the windows, through the keyholes—*anyhow*." Finally this contumacious coachman lengthened the check-strings into a sort of jury-reins, communicating with the horses ; with these he drove as steadily as Pekin had any right to expect. The Emperor returned after the briefest of circuits ; he descended in great pomp from his throne, with the severest resolution never to remount it. A public thanksgiving was ordered for his Majesty's happy escape from the disease of broken neck ; and the state-coach was dedicated thenceforward as a votive offering to the god Fo-Fo—whom the learned more accurately called Fi-Fi.

THOMAS DE QUINCEY

## THE ANARCHISTS

THE small boy's friendships are of a violent but ephemeral nature. But his outstanding characteristic is a passion for organising secret societies of the most desperate and mysterious character, all of which come speedily to a violent or humiliating dissolution.

I was once privileged to be introduced into the inner workings of a society called " The Anarchists." It was not a very original title, but it served its time, for the days of the Society were few and evil. Its aims were sanguinary and nebulous ; the Rules consisted almost entirely of a list of the penalties to be inflicted upon those who transgressed them. For instance, under Rule XXIV anyone who broke Rule XVII was com-

## THE ANARCHISTS

pelled to sit down for five minutes upon a chair into the seat of which a pot of jam had been emptied. (Economists will be relieved to hear that the jam was afterwards eaten by the executioners, the criminal being very properly barred from participating.)

The Anarchists had a private code of signals with which to communicate with one another in the presence of outsiders—in Prep, for instance. The code was simplicity itself. A single tap with a pencil upon the table denoted the letter A ; two taps, B ; and so on. As may be imagined, Y and Z involved much mental strain ; and as the transmitter of the message invariably lost count after fourteen or fifteen taps, and began all over again without any attempt either at explanation or apology, the gentleman who was acting as receiver usually found the task of decoding his signals a matter of extreme difficulty and some exasperation. Before the tangle could be straightened out a prefect inevitably swooped down and awarded both signallers fifty lines for creating a disturbance in Preparation.

However, the Anarchists, though they finished after the manner of their kind, did not slip into oblivion so noiselessly as some of their predecessors. In fact, nothing in their inky and jabbering life became them like their leaving of it.

One evening the entire brotherhood—there were about seven of them—were assembled in a study which would have held four comfortably, engaged in passing a vote of censure upon one Horace Bull, B.A., their form-master. Little though he knew it, Bull had been a marked man for some weeks. The Czar of all the Russias himself could hardly have occupied a more prominent position in the black books of Anarchy in general. To-day he had taken a step nearer his doom by clouting one Nixon minor, Vice-President of the Anarchists, on the side of the head.

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It was during the geography hour. Mr. Bull had asked Nixon to define a watershed. Nixon, who upon the previous evening had been too much occupied with his duties as Vice-President of the Anarchists to do much Prep, had replied with a seraphic smile that a watershed was "a place to shelter from the rain." As an improvised effort the answer seemed to him an extremely good one ; but Mr. Bull had promptly left his seat, addressed Nixon as a "cheeky little hound," and committed the assault complained of.

"This sort of thing," observed Rumford tertius, the President, "can't go on. What shall we do?"

"We might saw one of the legs of his chair through," suggested one of the members.

"Who's going to do it?" inquired the President. "We'll only get slain."

Silence fell, as it usually does when the question of belling the cat arrives at the practical stage.

"We could report him to the Head," said another voice. "We might get him the sack for assault—even quod! We could show Nixon's head to him. It would be a sound scheme to make it bleed a bit before we took him up."

The speaker fingered a heavy ruler lovingly, but Mr. Nixon edged coldly out of reach.

"Certainly," agreed the President, "Bashan ought to be stopped knocking us about in form."

"I'd rather have one clout over the earhole," observed an Anarchist who so far had not spoken, "than be taken along to Bashan's study and given six of the best. That is what the result would be. Hallo, Stinker, what's that?"

The gentleman addressed—a morose, unclean, and spectacled youth of scientific proclivities—was the latest recruit to the gang. He had been admitted at the instance of Master Nixon, who had pointed out that it would be a good thing to enrol as a member

## THE ANARCHISTS

someone who understood "Chemistry and Stinks generally." He could be used for the manufacture of bombs, and so on.

Stinker had produced from his pocket a corked test-tube, tightly packed with some dark substance.

"What's that?" inquired the Anarchists in chorus. (They nearly always talked in chorus.)

"It's a new kind of explosive," replied the inventor with great pride.

"I hope it's better than that new kind of stinkpot you invented for choir-practice," remarked a cynic from the corner of the study. "That was a rotten fraud, if you like! It smelt more like lily-of-the-valley than any decent stink."

"Dry up, Ashley minor!" rejoined the inventor indignantly. "This is a jolly good bomb. I made it to-day in the Lab, while The Badger was trying to put out a bonfire at the other end."

"Where does the patent come in?" inquired the President judicially.

"The patent is that it doesn't go off all at once."

"We know *that*!" observed the unbelieving Ashley.

"Do you chuck it or light it?" asked Nixon.

"You light it. At least, you shove it into the fire, and it goes off in about ten minutes. You see the idea? If Bashan doesn't see us put anything into the form-room fire, he will think it was something wrong with the coal."

The Anarchists, much interested, murmured approval.

"Good egg!" observed the President. "We'll put it into the fire to-morrow morning before he comes in, and after we have been at work ten minutes or so the thing will go off and blow the whole place to smithereens."

"Golly!" gobbled the Anarchists.

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“What about us, Stinker?” inquired a cautious conspirator. “Shan’t we get damaged?”

Stinker waved away the objection.

“We shall know it’s coming,” he said; “so we shall be able to dodge. But it will be a nasty jar for Bashan.”

There was a silence, full of rapt contemplation of to-morrow morning. Then the discordant voice of Ashley minor broke in.

“I don’t believe it will work. All your inventions are putrid, Stinker.”

“I’ll fight you!” squealed the outraged scientist, bounding to his feet.

“I expect it’ll turn out to be a fire-extinguisher, or something like that,” pursued the truculent Ashley.

“Hold the bomb,” said Stinker to the President, “while I——”

“Sit down,” urged the other Anarchists, drawing in their toes. “There’s no room here. Ashley minor, chuck it!”

“It won’t work,” muttered Ashley doggedly.

Suddenly a brilliant idea came upon Stinker.

“Won’t work, won’t it?” he screamed. “All right, then! We’ll shove it into this fire now, and you see if it doesn’t work!”

Among properly constituted Anarchistic Societies it is not customary, when the efficacy of a bomb is in dispute, to employ the members as a *corpus vile*. But the young do not fetter themselves with red-tape of this kind. With one accord Stinker’s suggestion was acclaimed, and the bomb was thrust into the glowing coals of Rumford’s study fire. The brotherhood, herded together within a few feet of the grate—the apartment measured seven feet by six—breathed hard and waited expectantly.

Five minutes passed—then ten.

“It ought to be pretty ripe now,” said the inventor anxiously.

## COMMODORE TRUNNION'S WEDDING

The President, who was sitting next the window, prudently muffled his features in the curtain. The others drew back as far as they could—about six inches—and waited.

Nothing happened.

“I am sure it will work all right,” declared the inventor desperately. “Perhaps the temperature of this fire——”

He knelt down and began to blow upon the flickering coals. There was a long and triumphant sniff from Master Ashley.

“I said it was only a rotten stinkp——” he began.

BANG !

There is a special department of Providence which watches over the youthful chemist. The explosion killed no one, though it blew the coals out of the grate and the pictures off the walls.

The person who suffered most was the inventor. He was led, howling but triumphant, to the Sanatorium.

“Luckily, sir,” explained Rumford to Mr. Bull a few days later, in answer to a kindly inquiry as to the extent of the patient’s injuries, “it was only his face.”

IAN HAY

## COMMODORE TRUNNION'S WEDDING

THE fame of this extraordinary conjunction spread all over the county ; and, on the day appointed for their spousals, the church was surrounded by an inconceivable multitude. The commodore, to give a specimen of his gallantry, by the advice of his friend Hatchway, resolved to appear on horseback on the grand occasion, at the head of all his male attendants, whom he had rigged with the white shirts and black caps formerly belonging to his barge’s crew ; and he

bought a couple of hunters for the accommodation of himself and his lieutenant. With this equipage, then, he set out from the garrison for the church, after having despatched a messenger to apprise the bride that he and his company were mounted. She got immediately into the coach, accompanied by her brother and his wife, and drove directly to the place of assignation, where several pews were demolished, and divers persons almost pressed to death, by the eagerness of the crowd that broke in to see the ceremony performed. Thus arrived at the altar, and the priest in attendance, they waited a whole half-hour for the commodore, at whose slowness they began to be under some apprehension, and accordingly dismissed a servant to quicken his pace. The valet, having rode something more than a mile, espied the whole troop disposed in a long field, crossing the road obliquely, and headed by the bridegroom and his friend Hatchway, who, finding himself hindered by a hedge from proceeding farther in the same direction, fired a pistol, and stood over to the other side, making an obtuse angle with the line of his former course ; and the rest of the squadron followed his example, keeping always in the rear of each other like a flight of wild geese.

Surprised at this strange method of journeying, the messenger came up, and told the commodore that his lady and her company expected him in the church, where they had tarried a considerable time, and were beginning to be very uneasy at his delay ; and therefore desired he would proceed with more expedition. To this message Mr. Trunnion replied, “ Hark ye, brother, don’t you see we make all possible speed ? Go back and tell those who sent you that the wind has shifted since we weighed anchor, and that we are obliged to make very short trips in tacking, by reason of the narrowness of the channel ; and that, as we lie within six points of the wind, they must make some

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allowance for variation and leeway." "Lord, sir!" said the valet, "what occasion have you to go zigzag in that manner? Do but clap spurs to your horses, and ride straight forward, and I'll engage you shall be at the church porch in less than a quarter of an hour." "What! right in the wind's eye?" answered the commander; "ahey! brother, where did you learn your navigation? Hawser Trunnion is not to be taught at this time of day how to lie his course, or keep his own reckoning. And as for you, brother, you best know the trim of your own frigate." The courier finding he had to do with people who would not be easily persuaded out of their own opinions, returned to the temple, and made a report of what he had seen and heard, to the no small consolation of the bride, who had begun to discover some signs of disquiet. Composed, however, by this piece of intelligence, she exerted her patience for the space of another half-hour, during which period, seeing no bridegroom arrive, she was exceedingly alarmed, so that all the spectators could easily perceive her perturbation, which manifested itself in frequent palpitations, heart-heavings, and alterations of countenance, in spite of the assistance of a smelling-bottle, which she incessantly applied to her nostrils.

Various were the conjectures of the company on this occasion. Some imagined he had mistaken the place of rendezvous, as he had never been at church since he first settled in that parish; others believed he had met with some accident, in consequence of which his attendants had carried him back to his own house; and a third set, in which the bride herself was thought to be comprehended, could not help suspecting that the commodore had changed his mind. But all these suppositions, ingenious as they were, happened to be wide of the true cause that detained him, which was no other than this:—The commodore and his crew

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

had, by dint of turning, almost weathered the parson's house that stood to windward of the church, when the notes of a pack of hounds unluckily reached the ears of the two hunters which Trunnion and the lieutenant bestrode. These fleet animals no sooner heard the enlivening sound, than, eager for the chase, they sprung away all of a sudden, and strained every nerve to partake of the sport, flew across the fields with incredible speed, overleaped hedges and ditches, and everything in their way, without the least regard to their unfortunate riders. The lieutenant, whose steed had got the heels of the other, finding it would be great folly and presumption in him to pretend to keep the saddle with his wooden leg, very wisely took the opportunity of throwing himself off in his passage through a field of rich clover, among which he lay at his ease ; and seeing his captain advancing at full gallop, hailed him with the salutation of "What cheer ? ho !" The commodore, who was in infinite distress, eyeing him askance, as he passed, replied with a faltering voice, "O d—n you ! you are safe at an anchor ; I wish to God I were as fast moored." Nevertheless, conscious of his disabled heel, he would not venture to try the experiment which had succeeded so well with Hatchway, but resolved to stick as close as possible to his horse's back, until Providence should interpose in his behalf.

With this view he dropped his whip, and with his right hand laid fast hold on the pummel, contracting every muscle in his body to secure himself in the seat, and grinning most formidably, in consequence of this exertion. In this attitude he was hurried on a considerable way, when all of a sudden his view was comforted by a five-bar gate that appeared before him, as he never doubted that there the career of his hunter must necessarily end. But, alas ! he reckoned without his host. Far from halting at this obstruction, the

## COMMODORE TRUNNION'S WEDDING

horse sprung over it with amazing agility, to the utter confusion and disorder of his owner, who lost his hat and periwig in the leap, and now began to think in good earnest that he was actually mounted on the back of the devil. He recommended himself to God, his reflection forsook him, his eyesight and all his other senses failed, he quitted the reins, and, fastening by instinct on the mane, was in this condition conveyed into the midst of the sportsmen, who were astonished at the sight of such an apparition. Neither was their surprise to be wondered at, if we reflect on the figure that presented itself to their view. The commodore's person was at all times an object of admiration ; much more so on this occasion, when every singularity was aggravated by the circumstances of his dress and disaster.

He had put on, in honour of his nuptials, his best coat of blue broad-cloth, cut by a tailor of Ramsgate, and trimmed with five dozen of brass buttons, large and small ; his breeches were of the same piece, fastened at the knees with large bunches of tape ; his waistcoat was of red plush, lapelled with green velvet, and garnished with vellum holes ; his boots bore an infinite resemblance, both in colour and shape, to a pair of leather buckets ; his shoulder was graced with a broad buff belt, from whence depended a huge hanger with a hilt like that of a backsword ; and on each side of his pommel appeared a rusty pistol, rammed in a case covered with a bearskin. The loss of his tie periwig and laced hat, which were curiosities of the kind, did not at all contribute to the improvement of the picture, but, on the contrary, by exhibiting his bald pate, and the natural extension of his lanthorn jaws, added to the peculiarity and extravagance of the whole. Such a spectacle could not have failed of diverting the whole company from the chase, had his horse thought proper to pursue a different route, but

the beast was too keen a sporter to choose any other way than that which the stag followed ; and, therefore, without stopping to gratify the curiosity of the spectators, he, in a few minutes, outstripped every hunter in the field. There being a deep hollow way betwixt him and the hounds, rather than ride round about the length of a furlong to a path that crossed the lane, he transported himself, at one jump, to the unspeakable astonishment and terror of a waggoner who chanced to be underneath, and saw this phenomenon fly over his carriage. This was not the only adventure he achieved. The stag having taken a deep river that lay in his way, every man directed his course to a bridge in the neighbourhood ; but our bridegroom's courser, despising all such conveniences, plunged into the stream without hesitation, and swam in a twinkling to the opposite shore. This sudden immersion into an element, of which Trunnion was properly a native, in all probability helped to recruit the exhausted spirits of his rider, who, at his landing on the other side, gave some tokens of sensation, by hallooing aloud for assistance, which he could not possibly receive, because his horse still maintained the advantage he had gained, and would not allow himself to be overtaken.

In short, after a long chase that lasted several hours, and extended to a dozen miles at least, he was the first in at the death of the deer, being seconded by the lieutenant's gelding, which, actuated by the same spirit, had, without a rider, followed his companion's example.

Our bridegroom finding himself at last brought up, or, in other words, at the end of his career, took the opportunity of the first pause, to desire the huntsmen would lend him a hand in dismounting ; and was by their condescension safely placed on the grass, where he sat staring at the company as they came in, with

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such wildness of astonishment in his looks, as if he had been a creature of another species, dropped among them from the clouds.

Before they had fleshed the hounds, however, he recollected himself, and seeing one of the sportsmen take a small flask out of his pocket and apply it to his mouth, judged the cordial to be no other than neat Cognac, which it really was ; and, expressing a desire of participation, was immediately accommodated with a moderate dose, which perfectly completed his recovery.

By this time he and his two horses had engrossed the attention of the whole crowd ; while some admired the elegant proportion and uncommon spirit of the two animals, the rest contemplated the surprising appearance of their master, whom before they had only seen *en passant* ; and at length one of the gentlemen, accosting him very courteously, signified his wonder at seeing him in such an equipage, and asked him if he had not dropped his companion by the way. " Why, look ye, brother," replied the commodore, " mayhap you think me an odd sort of a fellow, seeing me in this trim, especially as I have lost part of my rigging ; but this here is the case, d'ye see : I weighed anchor from my own house this morning at 10 A.M., with fair weather and a favourable breeze at south-south-east, being bound to the next church on the voyage of matrimony ; but, howsomever, we had not run down a quarter of a league, when the wind shifting, blowed directly in our teeth ; so that we were forced to tack all the way, d'ye see, and had almost beat up within sight of the port, when these horses, which I had bought but two days before (for my own part, I believe they are devils incarnate), luffed round in a trice, and then, refusing the helm, drove away like lightning with me and my lieutenant, who soon came to anchor in an exceeding good berth. As for

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my own part, I have been carried over rocks, and flats, and quicksands ; among which I have pitched away a special good tie periwig and an iron-bound hat ; and at last, thank God ! am got into smooth water and safe riding ; but if ever I venture my carcass upon such a hare'em-scare'em blood of a bitch again, my name is not Hawser Trunnion, d—n my eyes ! ”

One of the company, struck with his name, which he had often heard, immediately laid hold on his declaration at the close of this singular account ; and observing that his horses were very vicious, asked how he intended to return ? “ As for that matter,” replied Mr. Trunnion, “ I am resolved to hire a sledge or waggon, or such a thing as a jackass ; for I’ll be d—d if ever I cross the back of a horse again.” “ And what do you propose to do with these creatures ? ” said the other, pointing to the hunters ; “ they seem to have some mettle ; but then they are mere colts, and will take the devil and all of breaking. Methinks this hinder one is shoulder-slipped.” “ D—n them,” cried the commodore, “ I wish both their necks were broke, though the two cost me forty good yellow-boys.” “ Forty guineas ! ” exclaimed the stranger, who was a squire and a jockey, as well as owner of the pack, “ Lord ! Lord ! how a man may be imposed upon ! Why, these cattle are clumsy enough to go to plough ; mind what a flat counter ; do but observe how sharp this here one is in the withers ; then, he’s fired in the further fetlock.” In short, this connoisseur in horse-flesh, having discovered in them all the defects which can possibly be found in that species of animals, offered to give him ten guineas for the two, saying he would convert them into beasts of burden.—The owner, who, after what had happened, was very well disposed to listen to anything that was said to their prejudice, implicitly believed the truth of the stranger’s assevera-

## HARRIS IN THE MAZE

tions, discharged a furious volley of oaths against the rascal who had taken him in, and forthwith struck a bargain with the squire, who paid him instantly for his purchase ; in consequence of which he won the plate at the next Canterbury races.

This affair being transacted to the mutual satisfaction of both parties, as well as to the general entertainment of the company, who laughed in their sleeves at the dexterity of their friend, Trunnion was set upon the squire's own horse, and led by his servant in the midst of this cavalcade, which proceeded to a neighbouring village, where they had bespoke dinner, and where our bridegroom found means to provide himself with another hat and wig. With regard to his marriage, he bore his disappointment with the temper of a philosopher ; and, the exercise he had undergone having quickened his appetite, sat down at table in the midst of his new acquaintance, making a very hearty meal, and moistening every morsel with a draught of the ale, which he found very much to his satisfaction.

TOBIAS SMOLLETT

## HARRIS IN THE MAZE

HARRIS asked me if I'd ever been in the maze at Hampton Court. He said he went in once to show somebody else the way. He had studied it up in a map, and it was so simple that it seemed foolish—hardly worth the twopence charged for admission. Harris said he thought that map must have been got up as a practical joke, because it wasn't a bit like the real thing, and only misleading. It was a country cousin that Harris took in. He said :

"We'll just go in here, so that you can say you've been, but it's very simple. It's absurd to call it a maze. You keep on taking the first turning to the

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right. We'll just walk round for ten minutes, and then go and get some lunch."

They met some people soon after they had got inside, who said they had been there for three-quarters of an hour, and had had about enough of it. Harris told them they could follow him, if they liked ; he was just going in, and then should turn round and come out again. They said it was very kind of him, and fell behind, and followed.

They picked up various other people who wanted to get it over, as they went along, until they had absorbed all the persons in the maze. People who had given up all hopes of ever getting either in or out, or of ever seeing their home and friends again, plucked up courage, at the sight of Harris and his party, and joined the procession, blessing him. Harris said he should judge there must have been twenty people following him, in all ; and one woman with a baby, who had been there all the morning, insisted on taking his arm, for fear of losing him.

Harris kept on turning to the right, but it seemed a long way, and his cousin said he supposed it was a very big maze.

" Oh, one of the largest in Europe," said Harris.

" Yes, it must be," replied the cousin, " because we've walked a good two miles already."

Harris began to think it rather strange himself, but he held on until, at last, they passed the half of a penny bun on the ground that Harris' cousin swore he had noticed there seven minutes ago. Harris said : " Oh, impossible ! " but the woman with the baby said, " Not at all," as she herself had taken it from the child, and thrown it down there, just before she met Harris. She also added that she wished she never had met Harris, and expressed an opinion that he was an impostor. That made Harris mad, and he produced his map, and explained his theory.

## HARRIS IN THE MAZE

"The map may be all right enough," said one of the party, "if you know whereabouts in it we are now."

Harris didn't know, and suggested that the best thing to do would be to go back to the entrance and begin again. For the beginning again part of it there was not much enthusiasm ; but with regard to the advisability of going back to the entrance there was complete unanimity, and so they turned, and trailed after Harris again, in the opposite direction. About ten minutes more passed, and then they found themselves in the centre.

Harris thought at first of pretending that that was what he had been aiming at ; but the crowd looked dangerous, and he decided to treat it as an accident.

Anyhow, they had got something to start from then. They did know where they were, and the map was once more consulted, and the thing seemed simpler than ever, and off they started for the third time.

And three minutes later they were back in the centre again.

After that they simply couldn't get anywhere else. Whatever way they turned brought them back to the middle. It became so regular at length, that some of the people stopped there, and waited for the others to take a walk round, and come back to them. Harris drew out his map again, after a while, but the sight of it only infuriated the mob, and they told him to go and curl his hair with it. Harris said that he couldn't help feeling that, to a certain extent, he had become unpopular.

They all got crazy at last, and sang out for the keeper, and the man came and climbed up the ladder outside, and shouted out directions to them. But all their heads were, by this time, in such a confused whirl that they were incapable of grasping anything, and so the man told them to stop where they were, and he

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

would come to them. They huddled together, and waited ; and he climbed down, and came in.

He was a young keeper, as luck would have it, and new to the business ; and when he got in, he couldn't get to them, and then *he* got lost. They caught sight of him, every now and then, rushing about the other side of the hedge, and he would see them, and rush to get to them, and they would wait there for about five minutes, and then he would reappear again in exactly the same spot, and ask them where they had been.

They had to wait until one of the old keepers came back from his dinner before they got out.

Harris said he thought it was a very fine maze, so far as he was a judge ; and we agreed that we would try to get George to go into it on our way back.

JEROME K. JEROME

## A DRIVE IN RÜGEN

THERE was that afternoon in the market-place of Garz, and I know not why, since it was neither a Sunday nor a holiday, a brass band playing with a singular sonorousness. The horses having never before been required to listen to music, their functions at home being solely to draw me through the solitudes of forests, did not like it. I was astonished at the vigour of the dislike they showed who were wont to be so meek. They danced through Garz, pursued by the braying of the trumpets and the delighted shouts of the crowd, who seemed to bray and shout the louder the more the horses danced, and I was considering whether the time had not come for clinging to Gertrud and shutting my eyes when we turned a corner and got away from the noise on to the familiar rattle of the hard country road. I gave a sigh of relief and stretched out my head to see whether it were as straight

## A DRIVE IN RÜGEN

a bit as the last. It was quite as straight, and in the distance bearing down on us was a black speck that swelled at an awful speed into a motor-car. Now the horses had not yet seen a motor-car. Their nerves, already shaken by the brass band, would never stand such a horrid sight I thought, and prudence urged an immediate getting out and a rushing to their heads. "Stop, August!" I cried. "Jump out, Gertrud—there's a dreadful thing coming—they're sure to bolt——"

August slowed down in apparent obedience to my order, and without waiting for him to stop entirely, the motor being almost upon us, I jumped out on one side and Gertrud jumped out on the other. Before I had time to run to the horses' heads the motor whizzed past. The horses, strange to say, hardly cared at all, only mildly shying as August drove them slowly along without stopping.

"That's all right," I remarked, greatly relieved, to Gertrud, who still held her stocking. "Now we'll get in again."

But we could not get in again because August did not stop.

"Call to him to stop," I said to Gertrud, turning aside to pick some unusually big poppies.

She called, but he did not stop.

"Call louder, Gertrud," I said impatiently, for we were now a good way behind.

She called louder, but he did not stop.

Then I called; then she called; then we called together, but he did not stop. On the contrary, he was driving on now at the usual pace, rattling noisily over the hard road, getting more and more out of reach.

"Shout, shout, Gertrud!" I cried in a frenzy; but how could anyone so respectable as Gertrud shout? She sent a faint shriek after the ever-receding

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August, and when I tried to shout myself I was seized with such uncontrollable laughter that nothing whatever of the nature of a noise could be produced.

Meanwhile August was growing very small in the distance. He evidently did not know we had got out when the motor-car appeared, and was under the pleasing impression that we were sitting behind him being jogged comfortably towards Putbus. He dwindled and dwindled with a rapidity distressing to witness. "Shout, shout," I gasped, myself contorted with dreadful laughter, half wildest mirth and half despair.

She began to trot down the road after him, waving her stocking at his distant back and emitting a series of shrill shrieks, goaded by the exigencies of the situation.

The last we saw of the carriage was a yellow glint as the sun caught the shiny surface of my bandbox ; immediately afterwards it vanished over the edge of a far-away dip in the road, and we were alone with nature.

Gertrud and I stared at each other in speechless dismay. Then she looked on in silence while I sank on to a milestone and laughed. There was nothing, her look said, to laugh at, and much to be earnest over in our tragic predicament ; and I knew it, but I could not stop. August had had no instructions as to where he was driving to or where we were going to put up that night ; of Putbus and Marianne North he had never heard. With the open ordnance map on my lap I had merely called out directions, since leaving Miltzow, at cross-roads. Therefore in all human probability he would drive straight on till dark, no doubt in growing private astonishment at the absence of orders and the length of the way ; then when night came he would, I supposed, want to light his lamps, and getting down to do so would immediately be frozen

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with horror at what he saw, or rather did not see, in the carriage. What he would do after that I could not conceive. In sheerest despair I laughed till I cried, and the sight of Gertrud watching me silently from the middle of the deserted road only made me less able to leave off. Behind us in the distance, at the end of a vista of *chaussée* trees, were the houses of Garz; in front of us, a long way in front of us, rose the red spire of the church of Casnewitz, a village through which, as I still remembered from the map now driving along by itself, our road to Putbus lay. Up and down the whiteness of this road not a living creature, either in a cart or on its legs, was to be seen. The bald country, here very bald and desolate, stretched away on either side into nothingness. The wind sighed about, whisking little puffs of derisive dust into our eyes as it passed. There was a dreadful absence of anything like sounds.

"No doubt," said Gertrud, "August will soon return?"

"He won't," I said, wiping my eyes; "he'll go on for ever. He's wound up. Nothing will stop him."

"What, then, will the gracious one do?"

"Walk after him, I suppose," I said, getting up, "and trust to something unexpected making him find out he hasn't got us. But I'm afraid nothing will. Come on, Gertrud," I continued, feigning briskness while my heart was as lead, "it's nearly six already, and the road is long and lonely."

"Ach," groaned Gertrud, who never walks.

"Perhaps a cart will pass us and give us a lift. If not we'll walk to that village with the church over there and see if we can get something on wheels to pursue August with. Come on—I hope your boots are all right."

"Ach," groaned Gertrud again, lifting up one foot, as a dog pitifully lifts up its wounded paw, and show-

ing me a black cashmere boot of the sort that is soft and pleasant to the feet of servants who are not required to use them much.

"I'm afraid they're not much good on this hard road," I said. "Let us hope something will catch us up soon."

"*Ach*," groaned poor Gertrud, whose feet are very tender.

But nothing did catch us up, and we trudged along in grim silence, the desire to laugh all gone.

"You must, my dear Gertrud," I said after a while, seeking to be cheerful, "regard this in the light of healthful exercise. You and I are taking a pleasant afternoon walk together in Rügen."

Gertrud said nothing ; at all times loathing movement out of doors, she felt that this walking was peculiarly hateful because it had no visible end. And what would become of us if we were forced to spend the night in some inn without our luggage ? The only thing I had with me was my purse, the presence of which, containing as it did all the money I had brought, caused me to cast a careful eye at short intervals behind me, less in the hope of seeing a cart than in the fear of seeing a tramp ; and the only thing Gertrud had was her half-knitted stocking. Also, we had had nothing to eat but a scrappy tea-basket lunch hours before in the train, and my intention had been to have food at Putbus and then drive down to a place called Lauterbach, which being on the seashore was more convenient for the jelly-fish than Putbus, and spend the night there in an hotel much recommended by the guide-book. By this time according to my plans we ought to have been sitting in Putbus eating *Kalbsschnitzel*. "Gertrud," I asked rather faintly, my soul drooping within me at the thought of the *Kalbsschnitzel*, "are you hungry ?"

Gertrud sighed. "It is long since we ate," she said.

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We trudged on in silence for another five minutes.

"Gertrud," I asked again, for during those five minutes my thoughts had dwelt with a shameful persistency on the succulent and the gross, "are you *very* hungry?"

"The gracious one too must be in need of food," evaded Gertrud, who for some reason never would admit she wanted feeding.

"Oh, she is," I sighed; and again we trudged on in silence.

It seemed a long while before we reached that edge over which my handbox had disappeared flashing farewell as it went, and when we did get to it and eagerly looked along the fresh stretch of road in hopes of seeing August miraculously turned back we gave a simultaneous groan, for it was as deserted as the one we had just come along. Something lay in the middle of it a few yards on, a dark object like a little heap of brown leaves. Thinking it was leaves I saw no reason for comment; but Gertrud, whose eyes are very sharp, exclaimed.

"What, do you see August?" I cried.

"No, no—but there in the road—the tea-basket!"

It was indeed the tea-basket, shaken out as it naturally would be on the removal of the bodies that had kept it in its place, come to us like the ravens of old to give us strength and sustenance.

"It still contains food," said Gertrud, hurrying towards it.

"Thank heaven," said I.

We dragged it out of the road to the grass at the side, and Gertrud lit the spirit-lamp and warmed what was left in the teapot of the tea. It was of an awful blackness. No water was to be got near, and we dared not leave the road to look for any in case August should come back. There were some sorry pieces of cake, one or two chicken sandwiches grown unaccountably

horrible, and all those strawberries we had avoided at lunch because they were too small or too much squashed. Over these mournful revels the church spire of Casnewitz, now come much closer, presided; it was the silent witness of how honourably we shared, and how Gertrud got the odd sandwich because of her cashmere boots.

Then we buried the tea-basket in a ditch, in a bed of long grass and cow-parsley, for it was plain that I could not ask Gertrud, who could hardly walk as it was, to carry it, and it was equally plain that I could not carry it myself, for it was as mysteriously heavy as other tea-baskets and in size very nearly as big as I am. So we buried it, not without some natural regrets and a dim feeling that we were flying in the face of Providence, and there it is, I suppose, grown very rusty, to this day.

After that Gertrud got along a little better, and my thoughts being no longer concentrated on food I could think out what was best to be done. The result was that on reaching Casnewitz we inquired at once which of the cottages was an inn, and having found one asked a man who seemed to belong there to let us have a conveyance with as much speed as possible.

"Where have you come from?" he inquired, staring first at one and then at the other.

"Oh—from Garz."

"From Garz? Where do you want to go to?"

"To Putbus."

"To Putbus? Are you staying there?"

"No—yes—anyhow we wish to drive there. Kindly let us start as soon as possible."

"Start! I have no cart."

"Sir," said Gertrud with much dignity, "why did you not say so at once?"

"Ja, ja, *Fräulein*, why did I not?"

We walked out.

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"This is very unpleasant, Gertrud," I remarked, and I wondered what those at home would say if they knew that on the very first day of my driving-tour I had managed to lose the carriage and had had to bear the banter of publicans.

"There is a little shop," said Gertrud. "Does the gracious one permit that I make inquiries there?"

We went in and Gertrud did the talking.

"Putbus is not very far from here," said the old man presiding, who was at least polite. "Why do not the ladies walk? My horse has been out all day, and my son who drives him has other things now to do."

"Oh, we can't walk," I broke in. "We must drive, because we might want to go beyond Putbus—we are not sure—it depends——"

The old man looked puzzled. "Where is it that the ladies wish to go?" he inquired, trying to be patient.

"To Putbus, anyhow. Perhaps only to Putbus. We can't tell till we get there. But indeed, indeed you must let us have your horse."

Still puzzled, the old man went out to consult with his son, and we waited in profound dejection among candles and coffee. Putbus was not, as he had said, far, but I remembered how on the map it seemed to be a very nest of cross roads, all radiating from a round circus sort of place in the middle. Which of them would August consider to be the straight continuation of the road from Garz? Once beyond Putbus he would be lost to us indeed.

It took about half-an-hour to persuade the son and to harness the horse; and while this was going on we stood at the door watching the road and listening eagerly for sounds of wheels. One cart did pass, going in the direction of Garz, and when I heard it coming I was so sure that it was August that I triumphantly called to Gertrud to run and tell the old man we did

not need his son. Gertrud, wiser, waited till she saw what it was, and after the quenching of that sudden hope we both drooped more than ever.

“Where am I to drive to?” asked the son, whipping up his horse and bumping us away over the stones of Casnewitz. He sat huddled up looking exceedingly sulky, manifestly disgusted at having to go out again at the end of a day’s work. As for the cart, it was a sad contrast to the cushioned comfort of the vanished victoria. It was very high, very wooden, very shaky, and we sat on a plank in the middle of so terrible a noise that when we wanted to say anything we had to shout. “Where am I to drive to?” repeated the youth, scowling over his shoulder.

“Please drive straight on until you meet a carriage.”

“A what?”

“A carriage.”

“Whose carriage?”

“My carriage.”

He scowled round again with deepened disgust. “If you have a carriage,” he said, looking at us as though he were afraid we were lunatics, “why are you in my cart?”

“Oh, why, why are we!” I cried, wringing my hands, overcome by the wretchedness of our plight; for we were now beyond Casnewitz, and gazing anxiously ahead with the strained eyes of Sister Annes we saw the road as straight and as empty as ever.

The youth drove on in sullen silence, his very ears seeming to flap with scorn; no more good words would he waste on two mad women. The road now lay through woods, beautiful beech woods that belong to Prince Putbus, not fenced off but invitingly open to everyone, with green shimmering depths and occasional flashes of deer. The tops of the great beeches shone like gold against the sky. The sea must have been quite close, for though it was not visible the smell

of it was everywhere. The nearer we got to Putbus the more civilised did the road become. Seats appeared on either side at intervals that grew more frequent. Instead of the usual wooden sign-posts, iron ones with tarnished gilt lettering pointed down the forest lanes ; and soon we met the first of the Putbus lamp-posts, also iron and elaborate, wandered out, as it seemed, beyond the natural sphere of lamp-posts, to light the innocent country road. All these signs portended what Germans call *Badegäste*—in English obviously bath-guests, or, more elegantly, visitors to a bathing resort ; and presently when we were nearer Putbus we began to pass them strolling in groups and couples and sitting on the seats, which were of stone and could not have been good things for warm bath-guests to sit on.

Wretched as I was, I still saw the quaintness and prettiness of Putbus. There was a notice up that all vehicles must drive through it at a walking pace, so we crawled along its principal street, which, whatever else it contained, contained no sign of August. This street has Prince Putbus's grounds on one side and a line of irregular houses, all white, all old-fashioned, and all charming, on the other. A double row of great trees forms a shady walk on the edge of the grounds, and it is bountifully supplied with those stone seats so fatal, I am sure, to many an honest bath-guest. The grounds, trim and shady, have neat paths winding into their recesses from the road, with no fence or wall or obstacle of any sort to be surmounted by the timid tourist ; every tourist may walk in them as long and as often as he likes without the least preliminary bother of gates and lodges.

As we jolted slowly over the rough stones we were objects of the liveliest interest to the bath-guests sitting out on the pavement in front of the inns having supper. No sign whatever of August was to be seen, not even

an ordnance map, as I had half expected, lying in the road. Our cart made more noise here than ever, it being characteristic of Putbus that things on wheels are heard for an amazing time before and after their passing. It is the drowsiest little town. Grass grows undisturbed between the cobbles of the street, along the gutters, and in the cracks of the pavement on the side walk. One or two shops seem sufficient for the needs of all the inhabitants, including the boys at the school here, which is a sort of German Eton, and from what I saw in the windows their needs are chiefly picture-postcards and cakes. There is a white theatre with a colonnade as quaint as all the rest. The houses have many windows and balconies hung about with flowers. The place did not somehow seem real in the bright flood of evening sunlight, it looked like a place in a picture or a dream ; but the bath-guests, pausing in their eating to stare at us, were enjoying themselves in a very solid and undreamlike fashion, not in the least in harmony with the quaint background. In spite of my forlorn condition I could not help reflecting on its probable charms in winter under the clear green of the cold sky, with all these people away, when the frosted branches of the trees stretch across to deserted windows, when the theatre is silent for months, when the inns only keep as much of themselves open as meets the requirements of the infrequent commercial traveller, and the cutting wind blows down the street, empty all day long. Certainly a perfect place to spend a quiet winter in, to go to when one is tired of noise and bustle and of a world choked to the point of suffocation with strenuous persons trying to do each other good. Rooms in one of those spacious old houses with the large windows facing the sun, and plenty of books—if I were that abstracted but happy form of reptile called a bookworm, which I believe I am prevented from being only by my sex, the genus,

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I am told, being persistently male, I would take care to spend at least one of my life's winters in Putbus. How divinely quiet it would be. What a place for him who intends to pass an examination, to write a book, or who wants the crumples got by crushing together too long with his fellows to be smoothed out of his soul. And what walks there would be, to stretch legs and spirits grown stiff, in the crisp wintry woods where the pale sunshine falls across unspoilt snow. Sitting in my cart of sorrow in summer sultriness I could feel the ineffable pure cold of winter strike my face at the mere thought, the ineffable pure cold that spurs the most languid mind into activity.

Thus far had I got in my reflections, and we had jolted slowly down about half the length of the street, when a tremendous clatter of hoofs and wheels coming towards us apparently at a gallop in starkest defiance of regulations brought me back with a jerk to the miserable present.

"Bolted," remarked the surly youth, hastily drawing on one side.

The bath-guests at supper flung down their knives and forks and started up to look.

"*Halt! Halt!*" cried some of them. "*Es ist verboten! Schritt! Schritt!*"

"How can he halt?" cried others. "His horses have bolted."

"Then why does he beat them?" cried the first.

"It is August!" shrieked Gertrud. "August! August! We are here! Stop! Stop!"

For with staring eyes and set mouth August was actually galloping past us. This time he did hear Gertrud's shriek, acute with anguish, and pulled the horses on to their haunches. Never have I seen unhappy coachman with so white a face. He had had, it appeared, the most stringent private instructions before leaving home to take care of me, and on the

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very first day to let me somehow tumble out and lose me ! He was tearing back in the awful conviction that he would find Gertrud and myself in the form of corpses. "Thank God !" he cried devoutly on seeing us, "Thank God ! Is the gracious one unhurt ?"

Certainly poor August had had the worst of it.

Now it is most unlikely that the bath-guests of Putbus will ever enjoy themselves quite so much again. Their suppers all grew cold while they crowded round to see and listen. August, in his relief, was a changed creature. He was voluble and loud as I never could have believed. Jumping off his box to turn the horses round and help me out of the cart, he explained to me and to all and any who chose to listen how he had driven on and on through Putbus, straight round the circus to the continuation of the road on the north side, where sign-posts revealed to him that he was heading for Bergen, more and more surprised at receiving no orders, more and more struck by the extreme silence behind him. "The gracious one," he amplified for the benefit of the deeply interested tourists, "exchanges occasional observations with Fräulein"—the tourists gazed at Gertrud—"and the cessation of these became by degrees noticeable. Yet it is not permissible that a well-trained coachman should turn to look, or interfere, with a *Herrschaft* that chooses to be silent——"

"Let us get on, August," I interrupted, much embarrassed by all this.

"The luggage must be seen to—the strain of the rapid driving——"

A dozen helpful hands stretched out with offers of string.

"Finally," continued August, not to be stopped in his excited account, manipulating the string and my hold-all with shaking fingers—"finally by the mercy

of Providence the map used by the gracious one fell out"—I knew it would—"as a peasant was passing. He called to me, he pointed to the road, I pulled up, I turned round, and what did I see? What I then saw I shall never—no, never forget—no, not if my life should continue to a hundred." He put his hand on his heart and gasped. The crowd waited breathless. "I turned round," continued August, "and I saw nothing."

"But you said you would never forget what you saw," objected a dissatisfied-looking man.

"Never, never shall I forget it."

"Yet you saw nothing at all."

"Nothing, nothing. Never will I forget it."

"If you saw nothing you cannot forget it," persisted the dissatisfied man.

"I say I cannot—it is what I say."

"That will do, August," I said; "I wish to drive on."

The surly youth had been listening with his chin on his hand. He now removed his chin, stretched his hand across to me sitting safely among my cushions, and said, "Pay me."

"Pay him, Gertrud," I said; and having been paid he turned his horse and drove back to Casnewitz, scornful to the last.

"Go on, August," I ordered. "Go on. We can hold this thing on with our feet. Get on to your box and go on."

The energy in my voice penetrated at last through his agitation. He got up on to his box, settled himself in a flustered sort of fashion, the tourists fell apart staring their last and hardest at a vision about to vanish, and we drove away.

"It is impossible to forget that which has not been," called out the dissatisfied man as August passed him.

“ It is what I say—it is what I say ! ” cried August, irritated.

Nothing could have kept me in Putbus after this.

COUNTESS VON ARNIM

## THE ADVENTURES OF A SHILLING

I WAS last night visited by a friend of mine, who has an inexhaustible fund of discourse, and never fails to entertain his company with a variety of thoughts and hints that are altogether new and uncommon. Whether it were in complaisance to my way of living or his real opinion, he advanced the following paradox, “ That it required much greater talents to fill up and become a retired life than a life of business.” Upon this occasion he rallied very agreeably the busy men of the age, who only valued themselves for being in motion and passing through a series of trifling and insignificant actions. In the heat of his discourse, seeing a piece of money lying on my table, “ I defy,” says he, “ any of these active persons to produce half the adventures that this twelvepenny piece has been engaged in were it possible for him to give us an account of his life.”

My friend’s talk made so odd an impression upon my mind, that soon after I was a-bed I fell insensibly into a most unaccountable reverie, that had neither moral nor design in it, and cannot be so properly called a dream as a delirium.

Methought that the shilling that lay upon the table reared itself upon its edge and, turning the face towards me, opened its mouth and, in a soft silver sound, gave me the following account of his life and adventures :—

“ I was born ” (says he) “ on the side of a mountain, near a little village of Peru, and made a voyage to

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England in an ingot, under the convoy of Sir Francis Drake. I was, soon after my arrival, taken out of my Indian habit, refined, naturalised, and put into the British mode, with the face of Queen Elizabeth on one side, and the arms of the country on the other. Being thus equipped, I found in me a wonderful inclination to ramble, and visit all parts of the new world into which I was brought. The people very much favoured my natural disposition, and shifted me so fast from hand to hand, that before I was five years old, I had travelled into almost every corner of the nation. But in the beginning of my sixth year, to my unspeakable grief, I fell into the hands of a miserable old fellow, who clapped me into an iron chest, where I found five hundred more of my own quality who lay under the same confinement. The only relief we had, was to be taken out and counted over in the fresh air every morning and evening. After an imprisonment of several years, we heard somebody knocking at our chest, and breaking it open with a hammer. This we found was the old man's heir, who, as his father lay a-dying, was so good as to come to our release : he separated us that very day. What was the fate of my companions I know not : as for myself, I was sent to the apothecary's shop for a pint of sack. The apothecary gave me to an herb-woman, the herb-woman to a butcher, the butcher to a brewer, and the brewer to his wife who made a present of me to a nonconformist preacher. After this manner I made my way merrily through the world ; for, as I told you before, we shillings love nothing so much as travelling. I sometimes fetched in a shoulder of mutton, sometimes a play-book, and often had the satisfaction to treat a Templar at a twelvepenny ordinary, or carry him, with three friends, to Westminster Hall.

“ In the midst of this pleasant progress which I

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made from place to place, I was arrested by a superstitious old woman, who shut me up in a greasy purse, in pursuance of a foolish saying, 'That while she kept a Queen Elizabeth's shilling about her, she should never be without money.' I continued here a close prisoner for many months, till at last I was exchanged for eight and forty farthings.

"I thus rambled from pocket to pocket till the beginning of the civil wars, when, to my shame be it spoken, I was employed in raising soldiers against the king : for being of a very tempting breadth, a sergeant made use of me to inveigle country fellows, and list them in the service of the parliament.

"As soon as he had made one man sure, his way was to oblige him to take a shilling of a more homely figure, and then practise the same trick upon another. Thus I continued doing great mischief to the crown, till my officer, chancing one morning to walk abroad earlier than ordinary, sacrificed me to his pleasures, and presented me to a milk-maid. This wench bent me, and gave me to her sweetheart, applying the usual form of, "To my love and from my love." This ungenerous gallant marrying her within a few days after, pawned me for a dram of brandy, and drinking me out next day, I was beaten flat with a hammer, and again set a-running.

"After many adventures, which it would be tedious to relate, I was sent to a young spendthrift, in company with the will of his deceased father. The young fellow, who I found was very extravagant, gave great demonstrations of joy at the receiving of the will : but opening it, he found himself disinherited and cut off from the possession of a fair estate, by virtue of my being made a present to him. This put him into such a passion, that after having taken me in his hand, and cursed me, he squirmed me away from him as far as he could fling me. I chanced to light in an

unfrequented place under a dead wall, where I lay undiscovered and useless, during the usurpation of Oliver Cromwell.

“About a year after the king’s return, a poor cavalier that was walking there about dinner-time, fortunately cast his eye upon me, and, to the great joy of us both, carried me to a cook’s shop, where he dined upon me, and drank the king’s health. When I came again into the world, I found that I had been happier in my retirement than I thought, having probably, by that means, escaped wearing a monstrous pair of breeches.

“Being now of great credit and antiquity, I was rather looked upon as a medal than an ordinary coin ; for which reason a gamester laid hold of me, and converted me to a counter, having got together some dozens of us for that use. We led a melancholy life in his possession, being busy at those hours wherein current coin is at rest, and partaking the fate of our master, being in a few moments valued at a crown, a pound, or a sixpence, according to the situation in which the fortune of the cards placed us. I had at length the good luck to see my master break, by which means I was again sent abroad under my primitive denomination of a shilling.

“I shall pass over many other accidents of less moment, and hasten to that fatal catastrophe, when I fell into the hands of an artist, who conveyed me underground, and with an unmerciful pair of shears, cut off my titles, clipped my brims, retrenched my shape, rubbed me to my inmost ring, and, in short, so spoiled and pillaged me, that he did not leave me worth a groat. You may think what a confusion I was in, to see myself thus curtailed and disfigured. I should have been ashamed to have shown my head, had not all my old acquaintance been reduced to the same shameful figure, excepting some few that were punched

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through the belly. In the midst of this general calamity, when everybody thought our misfortune irretrievable, and our case desperate, we were thrown into the furnace together, and (as it often happens with cities rising out of a fire) appeared with greater beauty and lustre than we could ever boast of before. What has happened to me since this change of sex which you now see, I shall take some other opportunity to relate. In the meantime, I shall only repeat two adventures, as being very extraordinary, and neither of them having ever happened to me above once in my life. The first was, my being in a poet's pocket, who was so taken with the brightness and novelty of my appearance, that it gave occasion to the finest burlesque poem in the British language, entitled from me, *The Splendid Shilling*. The second adventure, which I must not omit, happened to me in the year 1703, when I was given away in charity to a blind man ; but indeed this was by a mistake, the person who gave me having heedlessly thrown me into the hat among a pennyworth of farthings."

JOSEPH ADDISON

## TRINKET'S COLT

It was Petty Sessions day in Skebawn, a cold, grey day of February. A case of trespass had dragged its burden of cross summonses and cross swearing far into the afternoon, and when I left the bench my head was singing from the bellowings of the attorneys, and the smell of their clients was heavy upon my palate.

The streets still testified to the fact that it was market day, and I evaded with difficulty the sinuous course of carts full of soddenly screwed people, and steered an equally devious one for myself among the groups anchored round the doors of the public-houses.

Skebawn possesses, among its legion of public-houses, one establishment which timorously, and almost imperceptibly, proffers tea to the thirsty. I turned in there, as was my custom on court days, and found the little dingy den, known as the Ladies' Coffee-Room, in the occupancy of my friend Mr. Florence McCarthy Knox, who was drinking strong tea and eating buns with serious simplicity. It was a first and quite unexpected glimpse of that domesticity that has now become a marked feature in his character.

"You're the very man I wanted to see," I said as I sat down beside him at the oilcloth-covered table; "a man I know in England who is not much of a judge of character has asked me to buy him a four-year-old down here, and as I should rather be stuck by a friend than a dealer, I wish you'd take over the job."

Flurry poured himself out another cup of tea, and dropped three lumps of sugar into it in silence.

Finally he said, "There isn't a four-year-old in this country that I'd be seen dead with at a pig fair."

This was discouraging, from the premier authority on horse-flesh in the district.

"But it isn't six weeks since you told me you had the finest filly in your stables that was ever foaled in the County Cork," I protested; "what's wrong with her?"

"Oh, is it that filly?" said Mr. Knox with a lenient smile; "she's gone these three weeks from me. I swapped her and £6 for a three-year-old Ironmonger colt, and after that I swapped the colt and £19 for that Bandon horse I rode last week at your place, and after that again I sold the Bandon horse for £75 to old Welply, and I had to give him back a couple of sovereigns luck-money. You see I did pretty well with the filly after all."

"Yes, yes—oh rather," I assented, as one dizzily

accepts the propositions of a bimetallist ; “ and you don’t know of anything else——? ”

The room in which we were seated was closely screened from the shop by a door with a muslin-curtained window in it ; several of the panes were broken, and at this juncture two voices that had for some time carried on a discussion forced themselves upon our attention.

“ Begging your pardon for contradicting you, ma’am,” said the voice of Mrs. McDonald, proprietress of the tea-shop, and a leading light in Skebawn Dissenting circles, shrilly tremulous with indignation, “ if the servants I recommend you won’t stop with you, it’s no fault of mine. If respectable young girls are set picking grass out of your gravel, in place of their proper work, certainly they will give warning ! ”

The voice that replied struck me as being a notable one, well-bred and imperious.

“ When I take a barefooted slut out of a cabin, I don’t expect her to dictate to me what her duties are ! ”

Flurry jerked up his chin in a noiseless laugh. “ It’s my grandmother ! ” he whispered. “ I bet you Mrs. McDonald don’t get much change out of her ! ”

“ If I set her to clean the pig-sty I expect her to obey me,” continued the voice in accents that would have made me clean forty pig-sties had she desired me to do so.

“ Very well, ma’am,” retorted Mrs. McDonald, “ if that’s the way you treat your servants, you needn’t come here again looking for them. I consider your conduct is neither that of a lady nor a Christian ! ”

“ Don’t you, indeed ? ” replied Flurry’s grandmother. “ Well, your opinion doesn’t greatly distress me, for, to tell you the truth, I don’t think you’re much of a judge.”

“ Didn’t I tell you she’d score ? ” murmured

Flurry, who was by this time applying his eye to a hole in the muslin curtain. "She's off," he went on, returning to his tea. "She's a great character ! She's eighty-three if she's a day, and she's as sound on her legs as a three-year-old ! Did you see that old shandrydan of hers in the street a while ago, and a fellow on the box with a red beard on him like Robinson Crusoe ? That old mare that was on the near side—Trinket her name is—is mighty near clean bred. I can tell you her foals are worth a bit of money."

I had heard of old Mrs. Knox of Aussolas ; indeed, I had seldom dined out in the neighbourhood without hearing some new story of her and her remarkable ménage, but it had not yet been my privilege to meet her.

"Well, now," went on Flurry in his slow voice, "I'll tell you a thing that's just come into my head. My grandmother promised me a foal of Trinket's the day I was one-and-twenty, and that's five years ago, and deuce a one I've got from her yet. You never were at Aussolas ? No, you were not. Well, I tell you the place there is like a circus with horses. She has a couple of score of them running wild in the woods like deer."

"Oh, come," I said, "I'm a bit of a liar myself——"

"Well, she has a dozen of them, anyhow, rattling good colts too, some of them, but they might as well be donkeys for all the good they are to me or anyone. It's not once in three years she sells one, and there she has them walking after her for bits of sugar, like a lot of dirty lapdogs," ended Flurry with disgust.

"Well, what's your plan ? Do you want me to make her a bid for one of the lapdogs ?"

"I was thinking," replied Flurry, with great deliberation, "that my birthday's this week, and maybe I could work a four-year-old colt of Trinket's she has out of her in honour of the occasion."

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“ And sell your grandmother’s birthday present to me ? ”

“ Just that, I suppose,” answered Flurry, with a slow wink.

A few days afterwards a letter from Mr. Knox informed me that he had “ squared the old lady, and it would be all right about the colt.” He further told me that Mrs. Knox had been good enough to offer me, with him, a day’s snipe shooting on the celebrated Aussolas bogs, and he proposed to drive me there the following Monday if convenient. Most people found it convenient to shoot the Aussolas snipe bog when they got the chance. Eight o’clock on the following Monday morning saw Flurry, myself, and a groom packed into a dogcart, with portmanteaus, gun-cases, and two rampant red setters.

It was a long drive, twelve miles at least, and a very cold one. We passed through long tracts of pasture country, fraught, for Flurry, with memories of runs, which were recorded for me, fence by fence, in every one of which the biggest dog-fox in the country had gone to ground, with not two feet—measured accurately on the handle of the whip—between him and the leading hound ; through bogs that imperceptibly melted into lakes, and finally down and down into a valley, where the fir-trees of Aussolas clustered darkly round a glittering lake, and all but hid the gray roofs and pointed gables of Aussolas Castle.

“ There’s a nice stretch of a demesne for you,” remarked Flurry, pointing downwards with the whip, “ and one little old woman holding it all in the heel of her fist. Well able to hold it she is, too, and always was, and she’ll live twenty years yet, if it’s only to spite the whole lot of us, and when all’s said and done goodness knows how she’ll leave it ! ”

“ It strikes me you were lucky to keep her up to her promise about the colt,” I said.

Flurry administered a composing kick to the ceaseless strivings of the red setters under the seat.

"I used to be rather a pet with her," he said, after a pause; "but mind you, I haven't got him yet, and if she gets any notion I want to sell him I'll never get him, so say nothing about the business to her."

The tall gates of Aussolas shrieked on their hinges as they admitted us, and shut with a clang behind us, in the faces of an old mare and a couple of young horses, who, foiled in their break for the excitements of the outer world, turned and galloped defiantly on either side of us. Flurry's admirable cob hammered on, regardless of all things save his duty.

"He's the only one I have that I'd trust myself here with," said his master, flicking him approvingly with the whip; "there are plenty of people afraid to come here at all, and when my grandmother goes out driving she has a boy on the box with a basket full of stones to peg at them. Talk of the dickens, here she is herself!"

A short, upright old woman was approaching, preceded by a white woolly dog with sore eyes and a bark like a tin trumpet; we both got out of the trap and advanced to meet the lady of the manor.

I may summarise her attire by saying that she looked as if she had robbed a scarecrow; her face was small and incongruously refined, the skinny hand that she extended to me had the grubby tan that bespoke the professional gardener, and was decorated with a magnificent diamond ring. On her head was a massive purple velvet bonnet.

"I am very glad to meet you, Major Yeates," she said with an old-fashioned precision of utterance; "your grandfather was a dancing partner of mine in old days at the Castle, when he was a handsome young aide-de-camp there, and I was—you may judge for yourself what I was."

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

She ended with a startling little hoot of laughter, and I was aware that she quite realised the world's opinion of her, and was indifferent to it.

Our way to the bogs took us across Mrs. Knox's home farm, and through a large field in which several young horses were grazing.

"There now, that's my fellow," said Flurry, pointing to a fine-looking colt, "the chestnut with the white diamond on his forehead. He'll run into three figures before he's done, but we'll not tell that to the old lady!"

The famous Aussolas bogs were as full of snipe as usual, and a good deal fuller of water than any bogs I had ever shot before. I was on my day, and Flurry was not, and as he is ordinarily an infinitely better snipe shot than I, I felt at peace with the world and all men as we walked back, wet through, at five o'clock.

The sunset had waned, and a big white moon was making the eastern tower of Aussolas look like a thing in a fairy tale or a play when we arrived at the hall door. An individual, whom I recognised as the Robinson Crusoe coachman, admitted us to a hall, the like of which one does not often see. The walls were panelled with dark oak up to the gallery that ran round three sides of it, the balusters of the wide staircase were heavily carved, and blackened portraits of Flurry's ancestors on the spindle side stared sourly down on their descendant as he tramped upstairs with the bog mould on his hobnailed boots.

We had just changed into dry clothes when Robinson Crusoe shoved his red beard round the corner of the door, with the information that the mistress said we were to stay for dinner. My heart sank. It was then barely half-past five. I said something about having no evening clothes and having to get home early.

"Sure the dinner'll be in another half-hour," said

Robinson Crusoe, joining hospitably in the conversation; "and as for evening clothes—— God bless ye!"

The door closed behind him.

"Never mind," said Flurry, "I dare say you'll be glad enough to eat another dinner by the time you get home." He laughed. "Poor Slipper!" he added inconsequently, and only laughed again when I asked for an explanation.

Old Mrs. Knox received us in the library, where she was seated by a roaring turf fire, which lit the room a good deal more effectively than the pair of candles that stood beside her in tall silver candlesticks. Ceaseless and implacable growls from under her chair indicated the presence of the woolly dog. She talked with confounding culture of the books that rose all round her to the ceiling; her evening dress was accomplished by means of an additional white shawl, rather dirtier than its congeners; as I took her in to dinner she quoted Virgil to me, and in the same breath screeched an objurgation at a being whose matted head rose suddenly into view from behind an ancient Chinese screen, as I have seen the head of a Zulu woman peer over a bush.

Dinner was as incongruous as everything else. Detestable soup in a splendid old silver tureen that was nearly as dark in hue as Robinson Crusoe's thumb; a perfect salmon, perfectly cooked, on a chipped kitchen dish; such cut glass as is not easy to find nowadays; sherry that, as Flurry subsequently remarked, would burn the shell off an egg; and a bottle of port, draped in immemorial cobwebs, wan with age, and probably priceless. Throughout the vicissitudes of the meal Mrs. Knox's conversation flowed on undismayed, directed sometimes at me—she had installed me in the position of friend of her youth, and talked to me as if I were my own grandfather—sometimes at Crusoe, with whom she had several heated arguments,

and sometimes she would make a statement of remarkable frankness on the subject of her horse-farming affairs to Flurry, who, very much on his best behaviour, agreed with all she said, and risked no original remark. As I listened to them both, I remembered with infinite amusement how he had told me once that "a pet name she had for him was 'Tony Lumpkin,' and no one but herself knew what she meant by it." It seemed strange that she made no allusion to Trinket's colt or to Flurry's birthday, but, mindful of my instructions, I held my peace.

As, at about half-past eight, we drove away in the moonlight, Flurry congratulated me solemnly on my success with his grandmother. He was good enough to tell me that she would marry me to-morrow if I asked her, and he wished I would, even if it was only to see what a nice grandson he'd be for me. A sympathetic giggle behind me told me that Michael, on the back seat, had heard and relished the jest.

We had left the gates of Aussolas about half a mile behind when, at the corner of a by-road, Flurry pulled up. A short squat figure arose from the black shadow of a furze bush and came out into the moonlight, swinging its arms like a cabman and cursing audibly.

"Oh murdher, oh murdher, Misther Flurry ! What kept ye at all ? 'Twould perish the crows to be waiting here the way I am these two hours——"

"Ah, shut your mouth, Slipper !" said Flurry, who, to my surprise, had turned back the rug and was taking off his driving coat. "I couldn't help it. Come on, Yeates, we've got to get out here."

"What for ?" I asked, in not unnatural bewilderment.

"It's all right. I'll tell you as we go along," replied my companion, who was already turning to follow Slipper up the by-road. "Take the trap on, Michael, and wait at the River's Cross." He waited for me to

come up with him, and then put his hand on my arm. "You see, Major, this is the way it is. My grandmother's given me that colt right enough, but if I waited for her to send him over to me I'd never see a hair of his tail. So I just thought that as we were over here we might as well take him back with us, and maybe you'll give us a help with him ; he'll not be altogether too handy for a first go off."

I was staggered. An infant in arms could scarcely have failed to discern the fishiness of the transaction, and I begged Mr. Knox not to put himself to this trouble on my account, as I had no doubt I could find a horse for my friend elsewhere. Mr. Knox assured me that it was no trouble at all, quite the contrary, and that, since his grandmother had given him the colt, he saw no reason why he should not take him when he wanted him ; also, that if I didn't want him he'd be glad enough to keep him himself ; and finally, that I wasn't the chap to go back on a friend, but I was welcome to drive back to Shreelane with Michael this minute if I liked.

Of course, I yielded in the end. I told Flurry I should lose my job over the business, and he said I could then marry his grandmother, and the discussion was abruptly closed by the necessity of following Slipper over a locked five-barred gate.

Our pioneer took us over about half a mile of country, knocking down stone gaps where practicable and scrambling over tall banks in the deceptive moonlight. We found ourselves at length in a field with a shed in one corner of it ; in a dim group of farm buildings a little way off a light was shining.

"Wait here," said Flurry to me in a whisper ; "the less noise the better. It's an open shed, and we'll just slip in and coax him out."

Slipper unwound from his waist a halter, and my colleagues glided like spectres into the shadow of the

shed, leaving me to meditate on my duties as Resident Magistrate, and on the questions that would be asked in the House by our local member when Slipper had given away the adventure in his cups.

In less than a minute three shadows emerged from the shed where two had gone in. They had got the colt.

“He came out as quiet as a calf when he winded the sugar,” said Flurry; “it was well for me I filled my pockets from grandmamma’s sugar basin.”

He and Slipper had a rope from each side of the colt’s head; they took him quickly across a field towards a gate. The colt stepped daintily between them over the moonlit grass; he snorted occasionally, but appeared on the whole amenable.

The trouble began later, and was due, as trouble often is, to the beguilements of a short cut. Against the maturer judgment of Slipper, Flurry insisted on following a route that he assured us he knew as well as his own pocket, and the consequence was that in about five minutes I found myself standing on top of a bank hanging on to a rope, on the other end of which the colt dangled and danced, while Flurry, with the other rope, lay prone in the ditch, and Slipper administered to the bewildered colt’s hindquarters such chastisement as could be ventured on.

I have no space to narrate in detail the atrocious difficulties and disasters of the short cut. How the colt set to work to buck, and went away across a field, dragging the faithful Slipper, literally *ventre à terre*, after him, while I picked myself in ignominy out of a briar patch, and Flurry cursed himself black in the face. How we were attacked by ferocious cur dogs, and I lost my eyeglass; and how, as we neared the River’s Cross, Flurry espied the police patrol on the road, and we all hid behind a rick of turf, while I realised in fulness what an exceptional ass I was to

have been beguiled into an enterprise that involved hiding with Slipper from the Royal Irish Constabulary.

Let it suffice to say that Trinket's infernal offspring was finally handed over on the high-road to Michael and Slipper, and Flurry drove me home in a state of mental and physical overthrow.

I saw nothing of my friend Mr. Knox for the next couple of days, by the end of which time I had worked up a high polish on my misgivings, and had determined to tell him that under no circumstances would I have anything to say to his grandmother's birthday present. It was like my usual luck that, instead of writing a note to this effect, I thought it would be good for my liver to walk across the hills to Tory Cottage and tell Flurry so in person.

It was a bright, blustery morning after a muggy day. The feeling of spring was in the air, the daffodils were already in bud, and crocuses showed purple in the grass on either side of the avenue. It was only a couple of miles to Tory Cottage by the way across the hills ; I walked fast, and it was barely twelve o'clock when I saw its pink walls and clumps of evergreens below me. As I looked down at it the chiming of Flurry's hounds in the kennels came to me on the wind ; I stood still to listen, and could almost have sworn that I was hearing again the clash of Magdalen bells, hard at work on May morning.

The path that I was following led downwards through a larch plantation to Flurry's back gate. Hot wafts from some hideous caldron at the other side of a wall apprised me of the vicinity of the kennels and their cuisine, and the fir-trees round were hung with gruesome and unknown joints. I thanked Heaven that I was not a master of hounds, and passed on as quickly as might be to the hall door.

I rang two or three times without response ; then

the door opened a couple of inches and was instantly slammed in my face. I heard the hurried paddling of bare feet on oilcloth, and a voice, "Hurry, Bridgie, hurry! There's quality at the door!"

Bridgie, holding a dirty cap on with one hand, presently arrived and informed me that she believed Mr. Knox was out about the place. She seemed perturbed, and she cast scared glances down the drive while speaking to me.

I knew enough of Flurry's habits to shape a tolerably direct course for his whereabouts. He was, as I had expected, in the training paddock, a field behind the stable-yard in which he had put up practice jumps for his horses. It was a good-sized field with clumps of furze in it, and Flurry was standing near one of these with his hands in his pockets, singularly unoccupied. I supposed that he was prospecting for a place to put up another jump. He did not see me coming, and turned with a start as I spoke to him. There was a queer expression of mingled guilt and what I can only describe as devilment in his gray eyes as he greeted me. In my dealings with Flurry Knox, I have since formed the habit of sitting tight, in a general way, when I see that expression.

"Well, who's coming next, I wonder!" he said, as he shook hands with me; "it's not ten minutes since I had two of your d——d peelers here searching the whole place for my grandmother's colt!"

"What!" I exclaimed, feeling cold all down my back; "do you mean the police have got hold of it?"

"They haven't got hold of the colt, anyway," said Flurry, looking sideways at me from under the peak of his cap, with the glint of the sun in his eye. "I got word in time before they came."

"What do you mean?" I demanded; "where is he? For Heaven's sake don't tell me you've sent the brute over to my place!"

St. Pauline Matt. Knox. B. D. Knox. S. D. coll. 10.

## TRINKET'S COLT

"It's a good job for you I didn't," replied Flurry, "as the police are on their way to Shreelane this minute to consult you about it. *You!*" He gave utterance to one of his short diabolical fits of laughter. "He's where they'll not find him, anyhow. Ho! ho! It's the funniest hand I ever played!"

"Oh yes, it's devilish funny, I've no doubt," I retorted, beginning to lose my temper, as is the manner of many people when they are frightened; "but I give you fair warning that if Mrs. Knox asks me any questions about it, I shall tell her the whole story."

"All right," responded Flurry; "and when you do, don't forget to tell her how you flogged the colt out on to the road over her own bounds ditch."

"Very well," I said hotly, "I may as well go home and send in my papers. They'll break me over this——"

"Ah, hold on, Major," said Flurry soothingly, "it'll be all right. No one knows anything. It's only on spec the old lady sent the bobbies here. If you'll keep quiet it'll all blow over."

"I don't care," I said, struggling hopelessly in the toils; "if I meet your grandmother, and she asks me about it, I shall tell her all I know."

"Please God you'll not meet her! After all, it's not once in a blue moon that she——" began Flurry. Even as he said the words his face changed. "Holy fly!" he ejaculated, "isn't that her dog coming into the field? Look at her bonnet over the wall! Hide, hide for your life!" He caught me by the shoulder and shoved me down among the furze bushes before I realised what had happened.

"Get in there! I'll talk to her."

I may as well confess that at the mere sight of Mrs. Knox's purple bonnet my heart had turned to water. In that moment I knew what it would be like to tell her how I, having eaten her salmon, and capped her

quotations, and drunk her best port, had gone forth and helped to steal her horse. I abandoned my dignity, my sense of honour ; I took the furze prickles to my breast and wallowed in them.

Mrs. Knox had advanced with vengeful speed ; already she was in high altercation with Flurry at no great distance from where I lay ; varying sounds of battle reached me, and I gathered that Flurry was not—to put it mildly—shrinking from that economy of truth that the situation required.

“ Is it that curby, long-backed brute ? You promised him to me long ago, but I wouldn’t be bothered with him ! ”

The old lady uttered a laugh of shrill derision. “ Is it likely I’d promise you my best colt ? And still more, is it likely that you’d refuse him if I did ? ”

“ Very well, ma’am.” Flurry’s voice was admirably indignant. “ Then I suppose I’m a liar and a thief.”

“ I’d be more obliged to you for the information if I hadn’t known it before,” responded his grandmother with lightning speed ; “ if you swore to me on a stack of Bibles you knew nothing about my colt I wouldn’t believe you ! I shall go straight to Major Yeates and ask his advice. I believe *him* to be a gentleman, in spite of the company he keeps ! ”

I writhed deeper into the furze bushes, and thereby discovered a sandy rabbit run, along which I crawled, with my cap well over my eyes, and the furze needles stabbing me through my stockings. The ground shelved a little, promising profounder concealment, but the bushes were very thick, and I laid hold of the bare stem of one to help my progress. It lifted out of the ground in my hand, revealing a freshly-cut stump. Something snorted not a yard away ; I glared through the opening, and was confronted by the long, horrified face of Mrs. Knox’s colt, mysteriously on a level with my own.

## TRINKET'S COLT

Even without the white diamond on his forehead I should have divined the truth ; but how in the name of wonder had Flurry persuaded him to couch like a woodcock in the heart of a furze brake ? For a full minute I lay as still as death for fear of frightening him, while the voices of Flurry and his grandmother raged on alarmingly close to me. The colt snorted, and blew long breaths through his wide nostrils, but he did not move. I crawled an inch or two nearer, and after a few seconds of cautious peering I grasped the position. They had buried him.

A small sandpit among the furze had been utilised as a grave ; they had filled him in up to his withers with sand, and a few furze bushes, artistically disposed round the pit, had done the rest. As the depth of Flurry's guile was revealed, laughter came upon me like a flood ; I gurgled and shook apoplectically, and the colt gazed at me with serious surprise, until a sudden outburst of barking close to my elbow administered a fresh shock to my tottering nerves.

Mrs. Knox's woolly dog had tracked me into the furze, and was now baying the colt and me with mingled terror and indignation. I addressed him in a whisper, with perfidious endearments, advancing a crafty hand towards him the while, made a snatch for the back of his neck, missed it badly, and got him by the ragged fleece of his hind quarters as he tried to flee. If I had flayed him alive he could hardly have uttered a more deafening series of yells, but, like a fool, instead of letting him go, I dragged him towards me, and tried to stifle the noise by holding his muzzle. The tussle lasted engrossingly for a few seconds, and then the climax of the nightmare arrived.

Mrs. Knox's voice, close behind me, said, " Let go my dog this instant, sir ! Who are you——"

Her voice faded away, and I knew that she also had seen the colt's head.

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I positively felt sorry for her. At her age there was no knowing what effect the shock might have on her. I scrambled to my feet and confronted her.

“Major Yeates !” she said. There was a deathly pause. “Will you kindly tell me,” said Mrs. Knox slowly, “am I in Bedlam, or are you? And *what is that?*”

She pointed to the colt, and that unfortunate animal, recognising the voice of his mistress, uttered a hoarse and lamentable whinny. Mrs. Knox felt around her for support, found only furze prickles, gazed speechlessly at me, and then, to her eternal honour, fell into wild cackles of laughter.

So, I may say, did Flurry and I. I embarked on my explanation and broke down ; Flurry followed suit and broke down too. Overwhelming laughter held us all three, disintegrating our very souls. Mrs. Knox pulled herself together first.

“I acquit you, Major Yeates, I acquit you, though appearances are against you. It’s clear enough to me you’ve fallen among thieves.” She stopped and glowered at Flurry. Her purple bonnet was over one eye. “I’ll thank you, sir,” she said, “to dig out that horse before I leave this place. And when you’ve dug him out you may keep him. I’ll be no receiver of stolen goods !”

She broke off and shook her fist at him. “Upon my conscience, Tony, I’d give a guinea to have thought of it myself !”

E. C. SOMERVILLE and MARTIN ROSS

## THE HAPPY THINKER HUNTS

AFTER looking about for another hare for half an hour, my blood is not so much up as it was. We are “Away” again. The hare makes for the hill. We

## THE HAPPY THINKER HUNTS

are galloping. I wish I'd had my stirrups put right before I started. A shirt button has broken, and I feel my collar rucking up ; my tie working round. I cram my hat on again. There's something hard projecting out of the saddle, that hurts my knees. Woa ! He *does* pull. I think we've leapt something ; a ditch. If so, I can ride better than I thought. What pleasure can a horse have in following the hounds at this pace ! Woa, woa ! My stirrup-straps are flying ; my anti-gropelos on both sides have come undone ; my breeches pinch my knees, my hat wants cramming on again. In doing this I drop a rein. I clutch at it. I feel I am pulling the martingale. Stop for a minute ; I am so tired. No one will stop.

*Happy Thought (at full gallop).*—" You gentlemen of England who live at home at ease, how little do you think upon " the dangers of this infernal hunting.

Byng's whole-uncle is at home reading his *Times*. Up a hill at a rush. Down a hill. Wind rushing at me. It makes me gasp like going into a cold bath. Think my shirt-collar has come undone on one side.

*Happy Thought (which flashes across me).*—*Mazeppa*. " Again he urges on his wild career ! " *Mazeppa* was tied on, though : I'm not.

I shall lose the antigropelos. Down a hill. Up a hill slowly. The horse is walking, apparently, right out of the saddle. Will he miss me ?

*Happy Thought.*—I shall come off over his tail.

I have an indistinct idea of horsemen careering all about me. I wish someone would stop my horse. Suddenly we all stop. I cannon against the old gentleman on the grey. Apology. He is very angry ; says, " I might have killed him." Pooh !

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*Happy Thought.*—If this is hunting, it isn't so difficult, after all. But what's the pleasure?

The hounds are scenting again. Stupid countryman says he's seen a hare about here. Delight of everybody. All these big men, horses, and dogs after a timid hare! Why doesn't the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals interfere? I thought they always shot hares. The dogs have got their tails up, and are whining. They are unhappy. If they find a hare they give that countryman a shilling.

*Happy Thought.*—Shall write to old Boodels, and tell him I'm going out with the hounds every day. Wish I was at home in an arm-chair. I've not come a "nasty cropper" as yet; but the day's not over.

Ask a countryman to fasten my antigropelos. Sixpence. Can he alter my stirrups? He does; not satisfactorily.

The hounds make a noise, and before the countryman has finished my stirrups, we are off. Nearly off altogether. I shan't come out again. Up another hill. This is part of the down country. My horse is beginning to get tired. He'll go quieter. Everyone passes me. Get on! get up! Tchk! He is panting. Get on! tchk! I feel excited. I should like to be on a long way ahead, in full cry, taking brooks, fences, and ditches. Get on! Get along, *will* you? tchk! What an obstinate brute! I think I could take him over that first hedge now. I find my legs kicking him. It has no effect. First tchking, then kicking! I'd give something to be at home. Dropped my rein; in getting it up, dropped my whip. Some people standing about won't see it. Horses and hounds a long way on. I think Milburd or Byng, as I'm his guest, might have stopped for me. Very selfish.

## THE HAPPY THINKER HUNTS

*Happy Thought.*—Get off and pick it up.

If I get off I shall have to get up again. Perhaps he won't stand still. I am all alone ; everyone has disappeared, except a few pedestrians who have been watching the sport from the top of this hill. Hate these sort of idle people who only come out to see accidents and laugh at anyone if he can't get on. I haven't got the slightest idea as to where I am. What county ? How far from Byng's ? The horse seems to me to be trembling, probably from excitement. He stretches his head out. What power a horse has in his head, he nearly pulled me off. He shakes himself violently. Very uncomfortable. Perhaps he's rousing himself for another effort. I have seen a " magic donkey " (I think) of pasteboard, in the shop windows; when the string is loose the head and tail fall. It occurs to me that my horse is, at this minute, like the Magic Donkey with the string loose.

*Happy Thought.*—Get off.

He is quivering in both his front legs. I feel it like a running current of mild electric shocks. Get out my note-book. The beast seems to be giving at the knees. I don't know much about horses, but instinct tells me he's going to lie down. Wonder if he's ever been in a circus ?

*Happy Thought.*—Get off at once.

Off. Just in time. He nearly falls. He is shivering and quivering all over. Poor fellow ! Woa, my man, woa, then, poor fellow ! I have got hold of his bridle at the bit. His eyes are glaring at me : what the deuce is the matter with the beast ?

*Happy Thought.*—Is he going mad ! ! !

He pulls his head away from me—he jerks back :

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he pulls me after him. I try to draw him towards me : he jerks back more and more. His bit's coming out of his mouth. Is he going to rear ? or kick ? or plunge ? or bite me ? What is the matter with him ? Is there such a thing as a lunatic asylum for horses ?

*Happy Thought.*—Ask someone to hold him.

Two pedestrians come towards me cautiously, an elderly man in yellow gaiters, and a respectable person in black. Horse snorts wildly, grunts, glares, shivers, jerks himself back : I can't hold on much longer. If he runs away he'll become a wild horse on the downs, and I shall have to pay for him. Hold on. Apparently he's trying to run away backwards.

*Happy Thought.*—Say to man in gaiters, very civilly, "Would you mind holding my horse while I pick up my whip," as if there was nothing the matter. He shakes his head, grins, and keeps at a distance. In *his* opinion, the horse has got the staggers.

The staggers ! Good heavens ! I ask him, "Do they last long ?"

"Long time, generally," he answers. "Will he fall ?" I ask. "Most likely," he answers. Then, I ask him, angrily, why the deuce he stands there doing nothing ? Why doesn't he get a doctor ? If he'll hold the beast for a minute, *I'll* run to the village for a doctor.

He says, "There ain't no village nearer than Radsfort, six miles from here." Then I'll run six miles, if he'll only hold my horse. He won't—obstinate fool : then what's he standing looking at me for, and doing nothing ? He says he's as much right to be on the downs as I have. The horse is getting worse : he nearly falls. Ho ! hold up. He holds up convulsively, but shows an inclination to fall on his side and roll

## THE HAPPY THINKER HUNTS

down the hill. I haven't got the smallest idea what I should do if he rolled down the hill.

*Happy Thought (which strikes the Person in black).—*Loosen his girths.

*Happy Thought (which strikes me).—*Do it yourself.

He won't—the coward. He says he's afraid he'll kick. Kick ! he won't kick, I tell him. I think I should feel the same if I was in his place. I urge him to the work, explaining that I would do it myself if I wasn't holding his head. He makes short nervous darts at the horse's girths, keeping his eye on his nearer hind leg. I encourage him and say, "Bravo, capital !" as if he were a bull-fighter. He loosens one girth. Do the other : he won't.

Horse still shivering. Now he is dragging away from me, and trying to get down hill backward, harder than ever. "Staggers" are like hysterics. What do you do to people in hysterics ? Cold water, vinegar—hit them on the palms of their hands. Man behind a hedge, about a hundred yards distant, who has been looking on in safety, halloes out some advice unintelligibly. Why doesn't he come close up ? I shout back irritably, "What ?" He repeats, evidently advice, but unintelligible. It sounds like, "If you arshy-booshy-marnsy-goggo (*unintelligible*), you'll soon make him balshybalshy (*unintelligible*), and then you can easily *caushey-cooshey-caushey*." Why on earth can't he speak plainly ?

I can only return irritably and excitedly shouting to him, "Wha-a-at ? What do you say ?" He walks off in the opposite direction. I ask who is that man ? Nobody knows. I should like to have him taken up and flogged. No change in the horse's symptoms. Where are Byng, Milburd, and the rest ? They must have missed me. I think they might have come back. I say, bitterly, "Friendship !" Confound the

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horse, and the harriers, and everybody. Here, hold up !

Another man comes up. Tall and thin, he stands with the other two and stares as if it was an exhibition. If there is one thing that makes me angry, it is idiots staring, helplessly. The last idiot who has come up has something to say on the subject. The horse is shaking, gasping ; I know he'll fall. If he falls, I've heard cabmen say in London, " sit on his head."

*Prospect.*—Sitting on his head, in the middle of the bleak downs, until somebody comes who knows all about the staggers. If no one comes, sit on his head all night !!!

*Happy Thought* (which suddenly occurs to the last comer).  
—Cut his tongue.

What good'll that do ? " Relieve him," he replies. Then do it. He says he won't undertake the responsibility. He has got a pen-knife, and I may cut the tongue, if I like. Cut his tongue ! doesn't the man see I'm holding his head—I can't do everything. He replies by mentioning some vein in the horse's tongue which if cut instantly cures the staggers. It appears on inquiry that he doesn't know where the vein is. What helpless fools these country people are ! I thought country people knew all about horses !—What are they doing on the downs ? Nothing. Fools: I hate people who merely lounge about. Will any one of them get a doctor ? As I ask this the horse nearly falls. A ploughboy arrives.

*Happy Thought.*—He shall hold the horse.

I ask him : he grins : what an ass ! I command him imperiously to hold the horse. He says, in his dialect, that he can't. " Why not ? " I ask. " What on earth can he be doing ? " He replies, " Moind'n-

## THE HAPPY THINKER HUNTS

ruks." "What?" I bellow at him. "Moind'n-ruks." His reply is interpreted to me by the yellow gaiters—the boy is "minding rooks." The boy grins and shows me an enormous horse-pistol with cap on, pointed, under his arm, at me. The idea of trusting such an imbecile with a pistol! "Turn it the other way": he grins. "'Taint loaded." He explains that they only give him a cap—no powder. "Never mind, turn it the other way."

*Happy Thought.*—If the long thin man will hold my horse while I go to Radsfort, I will give him half a sovereign. I offer this diffidently, because he is such a respectable-looking person.

Respectable-looking person closes with the offer immediately. Yellow gaiters and man in black propose to show me where the village is: for money. Is *this* the noble English character that we read of in the villages of our happy land!! Mercenary, dastardly, griping, gaping fools and cowards, who've been delighting themselves with my miseries for the last hour, merely to trade upon them at last.

Long man holds the horse. The beast just as bad as ever. Don't care now: got rid of him. Feel that all the responsibility is on the long man. Wonder what the long man will do if he falls on his side. It's worth ten shillings to be free.

Miserable work walking. Beginning to rain.

Man on horseback coming towards me.

*Happy Thought.*—Byng's groom. I can imagine the delight of a shipwrecked man on a desert island on seeing somebody he knows rowing towards him. He has come back to look for me. He is on his master's horse, and the ladies and his master are in the pony-trap in the road just below. The ladies!

*Happy Thought.*—Be driven home. Soft cushions: rugs.

SIR FRANCIS BURNAND

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

### CROSSING TO FRANCE

CHANGE English money into French at Victoria Station, where superior young gentleman in little kiosk refuses to let me have anything smaller than one-hundred-franc notes. I ask what use *that* will be when it comes to porters, but superior young gentleman remains adamant. Infinitely competent person in blue and gold, labelled Dean & Dawson, comes to my rescue, miraculously provides me with change, says Have I booked a seat, pilots me to it, and tells me that he represents the best-known Travel Agency in London. I assure him warmly that I shall never patronise any other—which is true—and we part with mutual esteem. I make note on half of torn luggage-label to the effect that it would be merest honesty to write and congratulate D. & D. on admirable employé—but feel that I shall probably never do it.

Journey to Folkestone entirely occupied in looking out of train window and seeing quite large trees bowed to earth by force of wind. Cook's words recur most unpleasantly. Also recall various forms of advice received, and find it difficult to decide between going instantly to the Ladies' Saloon, taking off my hat, and lying down Perfectly Flat (Mademoiselle's suggestion), or Keeping in the Fresh Air at All Costs and Thinking about Other Things (course advocated on a postcard by Aunt Gertrude). Choice taken out of my hands by discovery that Ladies' Saloon is entirely filled, within five minutes of going on board, by other people, who have all taken off their hats and are lying down Perfectly Flat.

Return to deck, sit on suit-case, and decide to Think about Other Things. Schoolmaster and his wife, who are going to Boulogne for a holiday, talk to one another across me about University Extension Course,

## CROSSING TO FRANCE

and appear to be superior to the elements. I take out *Jane Eyre* from coat-pocket—partly in faint hope of impressing them, and partly to distract my mind—but remember Cousin Maud, and am forced to conclusion that she may have been right. Perhaps advice equally correct in respect of repeating poetry? Can think of nothing whatever, except extraordinary damp chill which appears to be creeping over me. Schoolmaster suddenly says to me: “Quite all *right*, aren’t you?” To which I reply, Oh yes, and he laughs in a bright and scholastic way and talks about the Matterhorn. Although unaware of any conscious recollection of it, find myself inwardly repeating curious and ingenious example of alliterative verse, committed to memory in my schooldays. (*Note*: Can dimly understand why the dying revert to impressions of early infancy.)

Just as I get to:

“Cossack Commanders cannonading come  
Dealing destruction’s devastating doom—”

elements overcome me altogether. Have dim remembrance of hearing schoolmaster exclaim in authoritative tones to everybody within earshot: “Make way for this lady—she is *Ill*—which injunction he repeats every time I am compelled to leave suitcase. Throughout intervals I continue to grapple more or less deliriously with alliterative poem, and do not give up altogether until

“Reason returns, religious rights redound”

is reached. This I consider creditable.

Attain Boulogne at last, discover reserved seat in train, am told by several officials whom I question that we do, or alternatively, do not, change when we reach Paris, give up the elucidation of the point for the moment and demand—and obtain—small glass of brandy, which restores me.

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*July 18th, at Ste. Agathe.*—Vicissitudes of travel very strange, and am struck—as often—by enormous dissimilarity between journeys undertaken in real life and as reported in fiction. Can remember very few novels in which train journey of any kind does not involve either (a) Hectic encounter with member of opposite sex, leading to tense emotional issue ; (b) discovery of murdered body in hideously battered condition, under circumstances which utterly defy detection ; (c) elopement between two people each of whom is married to somebody else, culminating in severe disillusionment or lofty renunciation.

Nothing of all this enlivens my own peregrinations, but on the other hand, the night not without incident.

Second-class carriage full, and am not fortunate enough to obtain corner-seat. American young gentleman sits opposite, and elderly French couple, with talkative friend wearing blue *béret*, who trims his nails with a pocket-knife and tells us about the state of the wine-trade.

I have dusty and elderly mother in black on one side, and her two sons—names turn out to be *Guguste* and *Dédé*—on the other. (*Dédé* looks about fifteen, but wears socks, which I think a mistake, but must beware of insularity.)

Towards eleven o'clock we all subside into silence, except the blue *béret*, who is now launched on tennis-champions, and has much to say about all of them. American young gentleman looks uneasy at mention of any of his compatriots, but evidently does not understand enough French to follow blue *béret's* remarks—which is as well.

Just as we all—except indefatigable *béret*, now eating small sausage-rolls—drop one by one into slumber, train stops at station and fragments of altercation break out in corridor concerning admission, or otherwise, of someone evidently accompanied by large dog.

## CROSSING TO FRANCE

This is opposed by masculine voice repeating steadily, at short intervals : “ *Un chien n'est pas une personne,*” and heavily backed by assenting chorus, repeating after him : “ *Mais non, un chien n'est pas une personne.*”

To this I fall asleep, but wake a long time afterwards, to sounds of appealing enquiry floating in from corridor : “ *Mais voyons—N'est-ce pas qu'un chien n'est pas une personne ?*”

The point still unsettled when I sleep again, and in the morning no more is heard, and I speculate in vain as to whether owner of the *chien* remained with him on the station, or is having *tête-à-tête* journey with him in separate carriage altogether. Wash inadequately, in extremely dirty accommodation provided, after waiting some time in lengthy queue. Make distressing discovery that there is no way of obtaining breakfast until train halts at Avignon. Break this information later to American young gentleman, who falls into deep distress and says that he does not know the French for grape-fruit. Neither do I, but am able to inform him decisively that he will not require it.

Train is late, and does not reach Avignon till nearly ten. American young gentleman has a severe panic, and assures me that if he leaves the train it will start without him. This happened once before at Davenport, Iowa. In order to avoid similar calamity on this occasion, I offer to procure him a cup of coffee and two rolls, and successfully do so—but attend first to my own requirements. We all brighten after this, and Guguste announces his intention of shaving. His mother screams, and says, “ *Mais c'est fou*”—with which I privately agree—and everybody else remonstrates with Guguste (except Dédé, who is wrapped in gloom), and points out that the train is rocking, and he will cut himself. The blue *héret* goes so far as to predict that he will decapitate himself, at which everybody screams.

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Guguste remains adamant, and produces shaving apparatus and a little mug, which is given to Dédé to hold. We all sit round in great suspense, and Guguste is supported by one elbow by his mother, while he conducts operations to a conclusion which produces no perceptible change whatever in his appearance.

After this excitement we all suffer from reaction, and sink into hot and dusty silence. Scenery gets rocky and sandy, with heat-haze shimmering over all, and occasional glimpses of bright blue-and-green sea.

At intervals train stops, and ejects various people. We lose the elderly French couple—who leave a thermos behind them and have to be screamed at by Guguste from the window—and then the blue béret, eloquent to the last, and turning round on the platform to bow as train moves off again. Guguste, Dédé, and the mother remain with me to the end, as they are going on as far as Antibes. American young gentleman gets out when I do, but lose sight of him altogether in excitement of meeting Rose, charming in yellow embroidered linen. She says that she is glad to see me, and adds that I look a Rag—which is true, as I discover on reaching hotel and looking-glass—but kindly omits to add that I have smuts on my face, and that petticoat has mysteriously descended two and a half inches below my dress, imparting final touch of degradation to general appearance.

She recommends bath and bed, and I agree to both, but refuse proffered cup of tea, feeling this would be altogether too reminiscent of English countryside, and quite out of place. I ask, insanely, if letters from home are awaiting me—which, unless they were written before I left, they could not possibly be. Rose enquires after Robert and the children, and when I reply that I feel I ought not really to have come

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away without them, she again recommends bed. Feel that she is right, and go there.

E. M. DELAFIELD

## THE DEPARTURE OF PAPA

WHEN two young men, called Tricotrin and Pitou, lived in Paris, and they had gone to bed one December night, there came a peremptory pealing at the street door bell.

"Get up ! I think the house must be on fire !" said the composer.

"What of it ? I am only a lodger," yawned the poet.

"Don't plagiarise," said Pitou sharply ; "great minds are original even in conflagrations. Now, what the devil is it all about ?" And opening the window, he looked out into a snowstorm.

"Allô ! Is that you, Pitou ?" inquired a figure from the pavement. "It's I, Lajeunie."

"I might have known it," complained Pitou, withdrawing his head. And he shouted : "This reminds me : I have often meant to inquire into your preference for discharging your social obligations in the middle of the night. What is the true inwardness of it ? Haven't you heard that visits are permissible at other hours ?"

"I came on impulse," called the novelist apologetically ; "I am very much affected by something that has happened. Make haste and let me in—I'm getting frozen here."

"Can you tell the right time ?"

"Time ? I don't know. Two o'clock. Hurry up !"

"It's not as if I hadn't heard your spirited solo on a door-bell at two o'clock in the morning before," continued the composer. "What piques my curiosity

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is your habitual choice of such an hour for calling on your friends. Is it that you're reluctant to interrupt their work by coming before they have gone to sleep? Let us discuss the matter fully."

"Open the door!" thundered the novelist. "Mon Dieu! do you wish me to get pneumonia?"

He climbed to the attic presently, a rivulet running from his hat. And Tricotrin said politely, "Good-morning, Lajeunie. Is it a fine day? Take a seat and cheer us up. Your arrival is most opportune, for we always wonder what to do with ourselves about this time."

"I am not in a mood for your archaic humour," said Lajeunie, shaking his hat over the bed. "And if I know anything about you, you will be no less touched than I am. I have wept this evening!"

The pair regarded him more seriously.

"Our hearts are in their normal condition," affirmed Pitou. "What's up, cocky?"

Lajeunie helped himself to the last of the poet's cigarettes. "You may remember that I once presented you to a former actor called Papa Tripier?"

"I entertain a vast respect for him," said Tricotrin. "A sprightly octogenarian who resides in a boarding-house and has three meals every day. Does he still recount the latest news of Louis-Philippe?"

"He scarcely mentions Louis-Philippe any more; he is much changed since you met him. I was at the boarding-house to see him this evening, and my heart bled for him. They ill-treat him there."

"What's that?" cried the young men, shocked.

"It's quite true. They ill-treat him. That is to say, they insult him; they pick out the worst bits on the dishes for him; recently they have put him into a bedroom that used to be frankly a cellar. He suffers from rheumatism—and wall-paper and linoleum don't alter the fact that the walls are damp and the floor

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is stone. It's piteous. I could hardly control my indignation. And if you knew how good he has been to the wretches in his time ! He was the friend of the family in the days when he got big salaries. The gifts that he used to make them ! It was because they were his friends that he gave up his little flat and went to board with them ; old people in France do not care to live alone, of course—they are generally murdered. He tells me that butter would not melt in their mouths at the beginning, but when they felt sure of him they took more and more advantage.

“ But, good heavens ! why stop there ? There are other boarding-houses.”

“ There are others, but he is too old to look for one ; at eighty years of age, more or less, one is not adventurous. Also, it is not so simple a matter as it sounds for him to make a change ; you may be sure I put the point to him. I was bound to admit that there were difficulties. The pictures, and even the furniture in the cellar, are his own—relics of his flat, and his career ; his head swims at the thought of such a wholesale removal. To-day, too, he has only just enough to keep him, and he is, somehow, in arrears with his payments ; before he could go he would have to settle up. He said to me : ‘ It is the cellar I shall live and die in—unless I draw a prize in the Lottery ! There is nothing but that to set me free.’ That is his dream—that one day he may draw a prize in the Lottery. He denies himself tobacco and washes his linen in the basin that he may buy a ticket sometimes. The woman taunted him with it in my presence ; ‘ He is a laundress,’ she jeered. ‘ Monsieur Tripier is a laundress now ! Well, have you won a million in the Lottery, Monsieur Tripier ? That’s why he looks so joyful—he has won the first prize.’ And then to her daughter, in a voice that all the boarders could hear, ‘ Dotard !’ The daughter, giggling at

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these pleasantries, had on a gold bracelet that had been a present from the old man she mocked."

"The beasts ! I begin to understand what you want of us," exclaimed Tricotrin. "You did well to come. Papa Tripier must be rescued from this den, eh, Pitou ?"

"You bet !" said Pitou, who was pale with sympathy.

"How much does he owe the hogs ?"

"I understand that it is about two hundred francs," said the novelist deprecatingly. Personally I could contribute thirty. But you realise that we shall have more to do than raise the money—it's up to us to find a suitable place for him, and face the rumpus that the devil will make when she hears she is to lose him. She is a violent woman, and Papa himself is far too unnerved to defy her. My own idea was that the best plan would be for us to get him quietly out of the house without letting her suspect he wasn't coming back."

"And his goods and chattels ?" asked Tricotrin.

"When he had gone we could return with a van and remove them."

"Not bad. The first thing, though, is to find out whether he has enough pluck left to be amenable ; as a student of humanity, I may tell you that an ancient with a cowed spirit is an awkward victim to liberate. It horrifies me to hear of the change in him: when I saw him he was as mischievous as a monkey. Listen ! If we called on him together ? He would not resent our interest—we are all artists ? Where is the dungeon situated ?"

"It is run by a Madame Louchart, in Grisy-sur-Marne. I missed the last tram back, and was obliged to foot it ; that was what made me so late. Yes, we might all go out and lunch at the house—I suppose, if we get there early, she can raise enough food. What

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do you say?" "As we have only work to do, I say there's nothing to prevent us. You had better stop here to-night," said Tricotrin. "I shall be glad to renew my acquaintance with the gentleman."

He was so small, so quaint, so unassuming a person, Papa Tripier, in his little skull-cap, that it was difficult to understand how anyone could be cruel to him. But his sufferings in that house, where he had been induced to instal himself by protestations of affection, were far bitterer than the young men knew. The details of his gradual descent there, from an honoured figure and a benefactor, to a martyr and a butt, would have made a long and painful history. Madame Louchart had in her nature no more gratitude than a cat. It was not that, like most people, she could ignore services rendered in years gone by—she ignored services rendered yesterday. She would embrace a boarder with tears for granting her a loan, and scream abuse at him a morning after the loan was granted. They who had the energy speedily forsook her, and those who remained were either too timid or too poor to incense her by taking Papa's part. At an age when one needs friends most, he was alone. And nobody divined how furious a resentment glowed under his meek exterior. Nobody suspected how hotly the submissive old man, dumbly enduring a dozen insults daily, burned to revenge himself.

"If only I could draw the big prize!" It was his obsession. In warm weather he would make his slow way to the little park and sit there picturing for hours together the great scene in which he proclaimed his sudden wealth to the Loucharts. It absorbed him to imagine the passion of their self-reproach for having used him ill, their desperate efforts to reinstate themselves in his good graces before he departed grandly for a smart hotel. He dwelt upon their punishment

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when he had gone—their hourly, festering thought of the benefits they knew would have accrued to them but for their heartlessness. To indulge in the folly of such fancies was his solitary pastime. He would grow cheerful while they lasted and forget he wasn't able to leave at all.

When the three young men arrived to acquaint him with their project, it took a long while to persuade him it might be practicable, but, convinced at last, he embraced them again and again. His smiles and tears were touching to see. "What can I say to young fellows who busy themselves with saving an old chap like me? It is a situation from the theatre. *Sapristi!* it is of the epoch of Louis-Philippe."

"Except," said Tricotrin facetiously, "that in the halcyon days of Louis-Philippe there were no women like Madame Louchart!"

"Listen: I will admit privately that, even then, there were women who weren't perfect. All the same, you are quite correct—there was none as bad as she is. Ah! I envy you the sight of her chagrin when she hears I have gone. Without giving her a month's notice, too! It is sublime. My little bit all the year round is worth having, you know—especially for a cellar; and as a rule I pay promptly. You haven't a camera, any of you, to take a snapshot of her consternation? I would hang it among the portraits of me in my favourite parts." At the prospect of escape his face had flushed, his eyes twinkled; he grew so animated that it was a shock to the trio to see the relapse he suffered at the summons of the gong. As he entered the dining-room, with his ingratiating "*Bonjour, Madame; bonjour, mesdames et messieurs,*" he seemed to shrivel.

Madame Louchart stood at the head of the table, carving a sanguinary leg of mutton in thin slices. A corpulent woman with purple cheeks. She made

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no answer to his greeting. The miserable boarders murmured "*Bonjour, monsieur*" mechanically.

"Please seat yourselves, gentlemen," she said to the strangers; and the young men unfolded their napkins, and ate as many of the radishes as they could collect. The boarders recognised by the cloud on her brow that she was in a stormy mood, and they hoped the *bonne* would do nothing clumsy to provoke her. Lajeunie and Pitou exchanged sidelong glances, and Tricotrín muttered "Gay!"

It was after the woman had sat down and the bright red mutton was circulating that some unpleasantness occurred. Papa Tripier, though a Frenchman, did not like mutton underdone, and formerly there had always been an omelette provided for him, as a substitute, on the leg-of-mutton days. Such privileges as that he had long ceased to expect; but he believed himself at liberty to decline the mutton. To-day it proved that he was mistaken.

"Louise," said Madame Louchart sharply to the servant, "why have you not served Monsieur Tripier?"

"Monsieur does not wish for any," said the girl.

"*Comment?* You do not take mutton, Monsieur? Why not?"

"I have no appetite," murmured Papa deprecatingly.

"It is a defect that I have never remarked. What is there to complain of about the mutton?"

"*Permettez!* I do not complain; I have said nothing."

"You do not complain, but you turn up your nose. There is a way of saying nothing that is insolent. I do not allow such audacities at my table. Old age has not all the prerogatives; there are more people to be considered than yourself. You have to understand that you may not go on here in a manner that is disagreeable to the rest, *voyons*."

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“ *Madame, permettez—*”

“ Enough ! You will behave yourself ! ”

It needed all their discretion to restrain the young men from an outbreak for which he would have had to pay dearly when they had gone. The melancholy meal was no sooner over than they surrounded him, raging, “ We shall move heaven and earth,” they vowed. “ A month at most should see you out of it.” And that he might have some bright moments in the meantime, they undertook to report progress by letter once a week.

The first week was long to him, and the confidence they had inspired in him diminished, but after that he used to re-read each letter every day till the next one came—and his paces to the park grew brisker, and sometimes he would rub his hands and chuckle.

And week by week the plan developed, until the great news came that all the money had been subscribed, and a suitable room found at last. He read excitedly : “ We shall be with you on Wednesday morning at nine sharp. You will go out with us to “ take a little walk ” and never go back. Pitou conducts you to the new place, and Tricotrin and I return to the harridan’s to pay what is due, less the lump in lieu of notice, and remove your traps. Do all the secret packing that you can ; if we meet with violence, the fewer things we have to wrestle for the better. But don’t fash ; we shall leave nothing behind—not a shoe-button.”

It was pathetic and not without humour, the scene in which he cautiously pulled forth his luggage and, fearful lest he should be overheard, stole from the wardrobe to the trunk with collars and socks. Madame Louchart and her daughter clattered past the door twenty times, on the way to the *cour*, and as their feet smote the passage he stood motionless, holding his breath. Once, angered by the sense of his own

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indignity, he stood upright shaking his fist in the air—then he might have been again on the stage, so dramatic was his gesture of hate.

At last all preparations that he dared to make were made. He looked trembling at his pictures, at his furniture ; he could imagine the angry woman trying to pull each piece from the saviours' hands. What an undertaking, to remove like this ! Again he thought, " If only I had drawn the big prize ! "

A craving for a cigarette seized him, and for months he had discarded tobacco. It had been foolish perhaps to deny himself the solace in order to buy lottery tickets that yielded nothing but false hopes ? In any case, the circumstances to-day justified an extravagance. He would go out and get a packet of Marylands !

As he made his way down the cobbled street a newsvendor was coming up it bawling an issue of the official list of prizes that had been won in the latest drawings, and Papa Tripier listened to the shouts wistfully. Chance had exalted some paupers to independence. How sensational if, at such an hour, it had come to him ! What a different departure for him then ! Glorious, spectacular—the Loucharts at his feet. " If life were a comedy, I should have won a million in this situation," thought the old actor. And the shouts grew louder, and, quivering, he took a copy of the list from the vendor's hand.

He did not buy it in hopes of affluence, for he held no ticket at this time. He bought it quivering because of an audacious idea that had thrilled him. What if he fooled the Loucharts ? He might avenge himself by a lie !

But was he capable of it ? Had he still the strength for such a *tour de force* ? Yes, he felt that his resentment would lend him strength. One hour of rapture in the house where he had suffered for so long ! And after-

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wards, daily, in every hour that he might live, the jovial knowledge that remorse was gnawing at them !

After he had procured the cigarettes Papa gave himself a still rarer treat : he sat musing at his ease in a café. And before he rose he penned a few lines to the young men. He wrote : " On your arrival, my beloved boys, you will hear that I am out. Listen for my return, and do not be misled by what I say when I enter. You are to have an opportunity of witnessing my last performance."

When he went back, the copy of the list was hidden in his pocket.

" Well, have you won a fortune yet ? " Madame Louchart asked him coarsely at the evening meal. " I see there has been another drawing."

" It is so," faltered Papa. " Yes, yes, to be sure ! I had forgotten the date. Ah ! Now I shall have to wait till to-morrow."

" What a catastrophe ! " she jeered. And, to the company at large, she said, " He has got so half-witted that he cannot remember the dates of the drawings on which he wastes his money."

. . . . .

At the street door there was an ancient bell-pull, which he had always pulled diffidently ; and at about ten o'clock next morning Papa Tripier tugged at it with a force that startled the household and brought the wrathful proprietress herself from the kitchen. " You ? " she exclaimed, too astounded to say more at the moment.

Then she realised that he could not speak—he did not speak to his three visitors, who had hastened into the passage at the clamour of the bell ; he couldn't articulate. His jaw and head were frantic with the effort, and now he jerked a paper from his coat, but the only sound that came from him was his heavy panting. He seemed to be on the verge of a fit.

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"My God," she screamed, "he has drawn a prize!"

He answered with wild nods; he broke into shrill laughter that quavered into sobbing. "I am rich," he gasped, and tumbled unconscious into Tricotrin's arms—where he winked slyly.

When he decided to come to, he was on the sofa in the salon, and Madame Louchart fanned him with a journal, while her daughter held a liqueur of the best brandy to his lips.

"Ah, he revives, thank heaven!" said the woman piously. "Drink it, drink it, Monsieur Tripier. Ah, what a fright you gave us! I thought it was all over with you. Look how I am trembling!"

"Pardon, pardon," he murmured. His weak smile was apologetic. "I am right again."

"I do not doubt that the brandy saved your life," said she, "*n'est-ce pas, messieurs?* He would have been gone but for the brandy. No, no, do not try to get up yet—keep still awhile."

"I am all right," he repeated feebly. "Gentlemen, I have been a bad host, but—*que voulez-vous?* I do not gain a fortune every day—it took me unawares."

"Our fervent congratulations," cried the young men.

"And mine, God knows!" said Madame Louchart.

"And mine, Monsieur," said her daughter winningly, pressing him to finish the liqueur.

"Rich, rich! a miracle!"

"It is a big prize?" asked Madame Louchart with avidity.

"I am not so greedy," he laughed. "It is more, far more than I know how to spend."

The thought uppermost in her mind burst from her: "We shall not lose you because you are wealthy now? Where else would you be so much at home? Listen, there is a large room overlooking the garden. You would be like a prince in it."

"I am still confused. . . . It is long since I have

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lived in Paris," he said musingly. "A little sojourn in Paris would be pleasant—say at the *Ritz*. And when I touch the money, perhaps a trip to the Midi till the winter is over! By the way, if an impulse should seize me to spread my old wings in a hurry, you would have a legal claim to a month's rent, and that would embarrass me at the moment."

"Ah, Monsieur Tripier!" Her protest was vehement. "Shall we talk of legal claims after all these years? You hurt me. One does not mix business matters with affection. I have a heart. I may be irritable sometimes, but I have a heart. It is your home here—you come and go when you please. But I advise you, do nothing hastily! To speak as a friend, you would find a journey to the Midi exhausting."

"I have a fancy to gamble at Monte Carlo for once," he said; "I have never done it."

"What a madness!" she shrieked. "To lose your good money as soon as you get it?"

"When one can afford to lose one wins. And if I did lose fifty or a hundred thousand francs, what would it matter now? But, after all, I do not know—I might prefer Algiers. Yes, Algiers would be more amusing perhaps."

"Listen," she said, "you have been knocked off your legs to-day, your nerves are all upset—do not expose yourself to still more excitement. The best advice anyone could give you is to keep quiet for the present. Remain where you are till you have had time to turn things over in your mind. . . . *Alors*, I go to arrange a special *déjeuner* in honour of the event. Something chic—with such a wine as you will not get at the *Ritz*. I know where to find it." She returned to the visitors. "I may have the pleasure of your company, gentlemen?"

"I am afraid," said Lajeunie, with sincere regret, "that an urgent matter stands in the way."

## THE DEPARTURE OF PAPA

"We shall partake of the *chic déjeuner* first," declared Papa, rubbing his hands. "I foresee a spread from the *charcuterie*."

And it was not until her hospitality had been lavishly dispensed that he staggered her by a sudden whim to go to the *Ritz* at once. "They will find my ticket good security," he said.

"To-day?" she said, aghast. "*Mais!* Ah, no, you will not desert us like that? Let us rejoice with you for a few weeks first, at any rate. Listen, if it were newly papered the large room would be superb. I saw a wall-paper yesterday in the rue Hoche that is marvellous. You will not leave us at a moment's notice? The house would be like a tomb when you had gone. Look, and the child—she is half crying already!"

"I did not divine that I was so dear to you both," he said pointedly.

"What!" she cried, wounded to the core. "If you are dear to me? I did not love my father better, God rest his soul. Will they nurse you at the *Ritz* if you are sick? Will they look after you there as we should do? . . . *Enfin*, after the *Ritz*—you come back to us? It is understood? We shall guard your furniture religiously."

"Ah, it is of no value to me," said Papa, with a shrug. "The pictures, yes, but the furniture has seen its best of days. I shall give it away. When they find time, my friends will have it removed."

"Removed?" she echoed heavily. "Removed? It would be like making a clean sweep of all of us, *hein?*"

"Oh, Monsieur Tripier," pleaded her daughter, bending an artless gaze, "we should feel as if we had lost you for good if you took your lovely furniture away."

"We'll have it removed this afternoon, if you wish,"

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suggested Lajeunie with great good-will. "A pleasure to us, eh, boys?"

"We shall enjoy the job," assented Tricotrin and Pitou, helping themselves to more *foie gras*.

When he entered upon his new abode the furniture had not arrived nor had the expected fuel been delivered, and the old man sat on a camp-stool in a naked attic before an empty grate. But he sat smiling blissfully. He was seeing the look in the Loucharts' eyes as they watched him go. He contemplated the torments the pair would suffer, and his benign face could have been no more radiant if the fiction that he told them had been true. The luxury of revenge was sweeter to him than that of the *Ritz*—the glow of his triumph warmer than the sunshine of Algiers.

He rose and capered in sheer ecstasy.

LEONARD MERRICK

## ODD CHARGES

SEATED at his ease in the warm tap-room of the *Cauliflower*, the stranger had been eating and drinking for some time, apparently unconscious of the presence of the withered ancient who, huddled up in that corner of the settle which was nearer to the fire, fidgeted restlessly with an empty mug and blew with pathetic insistence through a churchwarden pipe which had long been cold. The stranger finished his meal with a sigh of content and then, rising from his chair, crossed over to the settle and, placing his mug on the time-worn table before him, began to fill his pipe.

The old man took a spill from the table and, holding it with trembling fingers to the blaze, gave him a light. The other thanked him, and then, leaning back in his corner of the settle, watched the smoke of his pipe

## ODD CHARGES

through half-closed eyes, and assented drowsily to the old man's remarks upon the weather.

"Bad time o' the year for going about," said the latter, "though I s'pose if you can eat and drink as much as you want, it don't matter. I s'pose you mightn't be a conjurer from London, sir?"

The traveller shook his head.

"I was 'oping you might be," said the old man.

The other manifested no curiosity.

"If you 'ad been," continued the old man, with a sigh, "I should ha' asked you to ha' done something useful. Ginrally speaking, conjurers do things that are no use to anyone; wot I should like to see a conjurer do would be to make this 'ere empty mug full o' beer and this empty pipe full o' shag tobacco. That's wot I should ha' made bold to ask you to do if you'd been one."

The traveller sighed, and, taking his short briar pipe from his mouth by the bowl, rapped three times upon the table with it. In a very short time a mug of ale and a paper cylinder of shag appeared on the table before the old man.

"Wot put me in mind o' your being a conjurer," said the latter, filling his pipe, after a satisfying draught from the mug, "is that you're uncommon like one that come to Claybury some time back and give a performance in this very room where we're now a-sitting. So far as looks go, you might be his brother."

The traveller said that he never had a brother.

"We didn't know 'e was a conjurer at fust," said the old man. "He 'ad come down for Wickham Fair and, being a day or two before'and, 'e was going to different villages round about to give performances. He came into the bar 'ere and ordered a mug o' beer, and while 'e was a-drinking of it stood talking about the weather. Then 'e asked Bill Chambers to excuse 'im for taking the liberty, and, putting his 'and to Bill's mug, took

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out a live frog. Bill was a very partikler man about wot 'e drunk, and I thought he'd ha' had a fit. He went on at Smith, the landlord, something shocking, and at last, for the sake o' peace and quietness, Smith gave 'im another pint to make up for it.

" 'It must ha' been asleep in the mug,' he ses.

" Bill said that 'e thought 'e knew who must ha' been asleep, and was just going to take a drink, when the conjurer asked 'em to excuse 'im agin. Bill put down the mug in a 'urry, and the conjurer put his 'and to the mug and took out a dead mouse. It would ha' been a 'ard thing to say which was the most upset, Bill Chambers or Smith, the landlord, and Bill, who was in a terrible state, asked why it was everything seemed to get into *his* mug.

" 'P'r'aps you're fond o' dumb animals, sir,' ses the conjurer. 'Do you 'appen to notice your coat-pocket is all of a wriggle?'

" He put his 'and to Bill's pocket and took out a little green snake ; then he put his 'and to Bill's trouser-pocket and took out a frog, while pore Bill's eyes looked as if they was coming out o' their sockets.

" 'Keep still,' ses the conjurer ; 'there's a lot more to come yet.'

" Bill Chambers gave a 'owl that was dreadful to listen to, and then 'e pushed the conjurer away and started undressing 'imself as fast as he could move 'is fingers. I believe he'd ha' taken off 'is shirt if it 'ad 'ad pockets in it, and then he stuck 'is feet close together and kept jumping into the air, and coming down on to 'is own clothes in his hobnailed boots.

" 'He *ain't* fond o' dumb animals, then,' ses the conjurer. Then he put his 'and on his 'art and bowed.

" 'Gentlemen all,' he ses. 'Aving given you this specimen of wot I can do, I beg to give notice that with the landlord's kind permission I shall give my celebrated conjuring entertainment in the tap-room

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this evening at seven o'clock ; ad—mission, three-pence each.'

" They didn't understand 'im at fust, but at last they see wot 'e meant, and arter explaining to Bill, who was still giving little jumps, they led 'im up into a corner and coaxed 'im into dressing 'imself agin. He wanted to fight the conjurer, but 'e was that tired 'e could scarcely stand, and by and by Smith, who 'ad said 'e wouldn't 'ave anything to do with it, gave way and said he'd risk it.

" The tap-room was crowded that night, but we all 'ad to pay threepence each—coining money, I call it. Some o' the things wot he done was very clever, but a'most from the fust start-off there was unpleasantness. When he asked somebody to lend 'im a pocket-'ankercher to turn into a white rabbit, Henery Walker rushed up and lent 'im 'is, but instead of a white rabbit it turned into a black one with two white spots on it, and arter Henery Walker 'ad sat for some time puzzling over it 'e got up and went off 'ome without saying good night to a soul.

" Then the conjurer borrowed Sam Jones's hat, and arter looking into it for some time 'e was that surprised and astonished that Sam Jones lost 'is temper and asked 'im whether he 'adn't seen a hat afore.

" 'Not like this,' ses the conjurer. And he pulled out a woman's dress and jacket and a pair o' boots. Then 'e took out a pound or two o' taters and some crusts o' bread and other things, and at last 'e gave it back to Sam Jones and shook 'is head at 'im, and told 'im if he wasn't very careful he'd spoil the shape of it.

" Then 'e asked somebody to lend 'im a watch, and, arter he 'ad promised to take the greatest care of it, Dicky Weed, the tailor, lent 'im a gold watch wot 'ad been left 'im by 'is great-aunt when she died. Dicky Weed thought a great deal o' that watch, and when

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the conjurer took a flat-iron and began to smash it up into little bits it took three men to hold 'im down in 'is seat.

“ ‘This is the most difficult trick o’ the lot,’ ses the conjurer, picking off a wheel wot ’ad stuck to the flat-iron. ‘Sometimes I can do it and sometimes I can’t. Last time I tried it it was a failure, and it cost me eighteen-pence and a pint o’ beer afore the gentleman the watch ’ad belonged to was satisfied. I gave ’im the bits, too.’

“ ‘If you don’t give me my watch back safe and sound,’ ses Dicky Weed, in a trembling voice, ‘it’ll cost you twenty pounds.’

“ ‘Ow much?’ ses the conjurer, with a start. ‘Well, I wish you’d told me that afore you lent it to me. Eighteen-pence is my price.’

“ He stirred the broken bits up with ’is finger and shook his ’ead.

“ ‘I’ve never tried one o’ these old-fashioned watches afore,’ he ses. ‘Owever, if I fail, gentlemen, it’ll be the fust and only trick I’ve failed in to-night. You can’t expect everything to turn out right, but if I do fail this time, gentlemen, I’ll try it agin if anybody else’ll lend me another watch.’

“ Dicky Weed tried to speak but couldn’t, and ’e sat there, with ’is face pale, staring at the pieces of ’is watch on the conjurer’s table. Then the conjurer took a big pistol with a trumpet-shaped barrel out of ’is box, and arter putting in a charge o’ powder picked up the pieces o’ watch and rammed them in arter it. We could ’ear the broken bits grating agin the ramrod, and arter ’e ’ad loaded it ’e walked round and handed it to us to look at.

“ ‘It’s all right,’ he ses to Dicky Weed ; ‘it’s going to be a success ; I could tell in the loading.’

“ He walked back to the other end of the room and held up the pistol.

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“ ‘I shall now fire this pistol,’ ’e ses, ‘and in so doing mend the watch. The explosion of the powder makes the bits o’ glass join together agin ; in flying through the air the wheels go round and round collecting all the other parts, and the watch as good as new and ticking away its ’ardest will be found in the coat pocket o’ the gentleman I shoot at.’

“He pointed the pistol fust at one and then at another, as if ’e couldn’t quite make up ’is mind, and none of ’em seemed to ’ave much liking for it. Peter Gubbins told ’im not to shoot at ’im because he ’ad a ’ole in his pocket, and Bill Chambers, when it pointed at ’im, up and told ’im to let somebody else ’ave a turn. The only one that didn’t flinch was Bob Pretty, the biggest poacher and the greatest rascal in Claybury. He’d been making fun o’ the tricks all along, saying out loud that he’d seen ’em all afore—and done better.

“ ‘Go on,’ he ses ; ‘I ain’t afraid of you ; you can’t shoot straight.’

“The conjurer pointed the pistol at ’im. Then ’e pulled the trigger and the pistol went off bang, and the same moment o’ time Bob Pretty jumped up with a ’orrible scream, and holding his ’ands over ’is eyes danced about as though he’d gone mad.

“Everybody started up at once and got round ’im, and asked ’im wot was the matter ; but Bob didn’t answer ’em. He kept on making a dreadful noise, and at last ’e broke out of the room and, holding ’is ’ankerchief to ’is face, ran off ’ome as ’ard as he could run.

“ ‘You’ve done it now, mate,’ ses Bill Chambers to the conjurer. ‘I thought you wouldn’t be satisfied till you’d done some ’arm. You’ve been and blinded pore Bob Pretty.’

“ ‘Nonsense,’ ses the conjurer. ‘He’s frightened, that’s all.’

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“ ‘*Frightened!*’ ses Peter Gubbins. ‘Why, you fired Dicky Weed’s watch straight into ’is face.’

“ ‘Rubbish,’ ses the conjurer ; ‘it dropped into ’is pocket, and he’ll find it there when ’e comes to ’is senses.’

“ ‘Do you mean to tell me that Bob Pretty ’as gone off with my watch in ’is pocket?’ screams Dicky Weed.

“ ‘I do,’ ses the other.

“ ‘You’d better get ’old of Bob afore ’e finds it out, Dicky,’ ses Bill Chambers.

“ Dicky Weed didn’t answer ’im ; he was already running along to Bob Pretty’s as fast as ’is legs would take ’im, with most of us follering behind to see wot ’appened.

“ The door was fastened when we got to it, but Dicky Weed banged away at it as ’ard as he could bang, and at last the bedroom winder went up and Mrs. Pretty stuck her ’ead out.

“ ‘*H’sh!*’ she ses, in a whisper. ‘Go away.’

“ ‘I want to see Bob,’ ses Dicky Weed.

“ ‘You can’t see ’im,’ ses Mrs. Pretty. ‘I’m getting ’im to bed. He’s been shot, pore dear. Can’t you hear ’im groaning?’

“ We ’adn’t up to then, but a’most direckly arter she ’ad spoke you could ha’ heard Bob’s groans a mile away. Dreadful, they was.

“ ‘There, there, pore dear,’ ses Mrs. Pretty.

“ ‘Shall I come in and ’elp you get ’im to bed?’ ses Dicky Weed, arf crying.

“ ‘No, thank you, Mr. Weed,’ ses Mrs. Pretty. ‘It’s very kind of you to offer, but ’e wouldn’t like any hands but mine to touch ’im. I’ll send in and let you know ’ow he is fust thing in the morning.’

“ ‘Try and get ’old of the coat, Dicky,’ ses Bill Chambers, in a whisper. ‘Offer to mend it for ’im. It’s sure to want it.’

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“ ‘Well, I’m sorry I can’t be no ’elp to you,’ ses Dicky Weed, ‘but I noticed a rent in Bob’s coat and, as ’e’s likely to be laid up a bit, it ud be a good opportunity for me to mend it for ’im. I won’t charge ’im nothing. If you drop it down, I’ll do it now.’

“ ‘Thankee,’ ses Mrs. Pretty ; ‘if you just wait a moment I’ll clear the pockets out and drop it down to you.’

“She turned back into the bedroom, and Dicky Weed ground ’is teeth together and told Bill Chambers that the next time he took ’is advice he’d remember it. He stood there trembling all over with temper, and when Mrs. Pretty came to the winder agin and dropped the coat on his ’ead and said that Bob felt his kindness very much, and he ’oped Dicky ud make a good job of it, because it was ’is fav’rite coat, he couldn’t speak. He stood there shaking all over till Mrs. Pretty ’ad shut the winder down agin, and then ’e turned to the conjurer, as ’ad come up with the rest of us, and asked ’im wot he was going to do about it now.

“ ‘I tell you he’s got the watch,’ ses the conjurer, pointing up at the winder. ‘It went into ’is pocket. I saw it go. He was no more shot than you were. If ’e was, why doesn’t he send for the doctor?’

“ ‘I can’t ’elp that,’ ses Dicky Weed. ‘I want my watch or else twenty pounds.’

“ ‘We’ll talk it over in a day or two,’ ses the conjurer. ‘I’m giving my celebrated entertainment at Wickham Fair on Monday, but I’ll come back ’ere to the *Cauliflower* the Saturday before and give another entertainment, and then we’ll see wot’s to be done. I can’t run away, because in any case I can’t afford to miss the fair.’

“Dicky Weed gave way at last and went off ’ome to bed and told ’is wife about it, and listening to ’er advice he got up at six o’clock in the morning and went round to see ’ow Bob Pretty was.

"Mrs. Pretty was up when 'e got there, and arter calling up the stairs to Bob told Dicky Weed to go upstairs. Bob Pretty was sitting up in bed with 'is face covered in bandages, and he seemed quite pleased to see 'im.

" 'It ain't everybody that ud get up at six o'clock to see 'ow I'm getting on,' he ses. 'You've got a feeling 'art, Dicky.'

"Dicky Weed coughed and looked round, wondering whether the watch was in the room, and, if so, where it was hidden.

" 'Now I'm 'ere I may as well tidy up the room for you a bit,' he ses, getting up. 'I don't like sitting idle.'

" 'Thankee, mate,' ses Bob ; and 'e lay still and watched Dicky Weed out of the corner of the eye that wasn't covered with the bandages.

"I don't suppose that room 'ad ever been tidied up so thoroughly since the Prettys 'ad lived there, but Dicky Weed couldn't see anything o' the watch, and wot made 'im more angry than anything else was Mrs. Pretty setting down in a chair with 'er 'ands folded in her lap and pointing out places that he 'adn't done.

" 'You leave 'im alone,' ses Bob. '*He knows wot 'e's arter.* Wot did you do with those little bits o' watch you found when you was bandaging me up, missis?'

" 'Don't ask me,' ses Mrs. Pretty. 'I was in such a state I don't know wot I was doing 'ardly.'

" 'Well, they must be about somewhere,' ses Bob. 'You 'ave a look for 'em, Dicky, and if you find 'em, keep 'em. They belong to you.'

"Dicky Weed tried to be civil and thank 'im, and then he went off 'ome and talked it over with 'is wife agin. People couldn't make up their minds whether Bob Pretty 'ad found the watch in 'is pocket and was shamming, or whether 'e was really shot, but they was

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all quite certain that, whichever way it was, Dicky Weed would never see 'is watch agin.

"On the Saturday evening this 'ere *Cauliflower* public-house was crowded, everybody being anxious to see the watch trick done over agin. We had 'eard that it 'ad been done all right at Cudford and Monksham ; but Bob Pretty said as 'ow he'd believe it when 'e saw it, and not afore.

"He was one o' the fust to turn up that night, because 'e said 'e wanted to know wot the conjurer was going to pay him for all 'is pain and suffering and having things said about 'is character. He came in leaning on a stick, with 'is face still bandaged, and sat right up close to the conjurer's table, and watched him as 'ard as he could as 'e went through 'is tricks.

" 'And now,' ses the conjurer, at last, ' I come to my celebrated watch trick. Some of you as was 'ere last Tuesday when I did it will remember that the man I fired the pistol at pretended that 'e'd been shot and run off 'ome with it in 'is pocket.'

" 'You're a liar !' ses Bob Pretty, standing up.

" 'Very good,' ses the conjurer ; ' you take that bandage off and show us all where you're hurt.'

" ' I shall do nothing o' the kind,' ses Bob. ' I don't take my orders from you.'

" 'Take the bandage off,' ses the conjurer, ' and if there's any shot marks I'll give you a couple o' sovereigns.'

" ' I'm afraid of the air getting to it,' ses Bob Pretty.

" ' You don't want to be afraid o' that, Bob,' ses John Biggs, the blacksmith, coming up behind and putting 'is great arms round 'im. ' Take off that rag, somebody ; I've got hold of 'im.'

" Bob Pretty started to struggle at fust, but then, seeing it was no good, kept quite quiet while they took off the bandages.

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“ ‘*There!* look at ‘im,’ ses the conjurer, pointing. ‘Not a mark on ‘is face, not one.’

“ ‘*Wot!*’ ses Bob Pretty. ‘Do you mean to say there’s no marks?’

“ ‘I do,’ ses the conjurer.

“ ‘Thank goodness!’ ses Bob Pretty, clasping his ‘ands. ‘Thank goodness! I was afraid I was disfigured for life. Lend me a bit o’ looking-glass, somebody; I can ‘ardly believe it.’

“ ‘You stole Dicky Weed’s watch,’ ses John Biggs. ‘I ‘ad my suspicions of you all along. You’re a thief, Bob Pretty. That’s wot you are.’

“ ‘Prove it,’ ses Bob Pretty. ‘You ‘eard wot the conjurer said the other night, that the last time he tried the trick ‘e failed, and ‘ad to give eighteen-pence to the man wot the watch ‘ad belonged to.’

“ ‘That was by way of a joke like,’ ses the conjurer to John Biggs. ‘I can always do it. I’m going to do it now. Will somebody ‘ave the kindness to lend me a watch?’

“ He looked all round the room, but nobody offered—except other men’s watches, wot wouldn’t lend ‘em.

“ ‘Come, come,’ he ses; ‘ain’t none of you got any trust in me? It’ll be as safe as if it was in your pocket. I want to prove to you that this man is a thief.’

“ He asked ‘em agin, and at last John Biggs took out ‘is silver watch and offered it to ‘im on the understanding that ‘e was on no account to fire into Bob Pretty’s pocket.

“ ‘Not likely,’ ses the conjurer. ‘Now, everybody take a good look at this watch, so as to make sure there’s no deceiving.’

“ He ‘anded it round, and arter everybody ‘ad taken a look at it ‘e took it up to the table and laid it down.

“ ‘Let me ‘ave a look at it,’ ses Bob Pretty, going up to the table. ‘I’m not going to ‘ave my good name took away for nothing if I can ‘elp it.’

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"He took it up and looked at it, and arter 'olding it to 'is ear put it down agin.

" "Is that the flat-iron it's going to be smashed with?" he ses.

" "It is," ses the conjurer, looking at 'im nasty like; 'p'r'aps you'd like to examine it.'

"Bob Pretty took it up and looked at it.

" "Yes, mates," he ses, 'it's a ordinary flat-iron. You couldn't 'ave anything better for smashing a watch with.'

"He 'eld it up in the air and, afore anybody could move, brought it down bang on the face o' the watch. The conjurer sprang at 'im and caught at 'is arm, but it was too late, and in a terrible state o' mind 'e turned round to John Biggs.

" "He's smashed your watch," he ses ; 'he's smashed your watch.'

" "Well," ses John Biggs, 'it 'ad got to be smashed, 'adn't it?'

" "Yes, but not by 'im," ses the conjurer, dancing about. 'I wash my 'ands of it now.'

" "Look 'ere," ses John Biggs ; 'don't you talk to me about washing your 'ands of it. You finish your trick and give me my watch back agin same as it was afore.'

" "Not now he's been interfering with it," ses the conjurer. 'He'd better do the trick now as he's so clever.'

" "I'd sooner 'ave you do it," ses John Biggs. 'Wot did you let 'im interfere for?'

" "Ow was I to know wot 'e was going to do?" ses the conjurer. 'You must settle it between you now. I'll 'ave nothing more to do with it.'

" "All right, John Biggs," ses Bob Pretty ; 'if 'e won't do it, I will. If it can be done, I don't s'pose it matters who does it. I don't think anybody could smash up a watch better than that.'

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“ John Biggs looked at it, and then ’e asked the conjurer once more to do the trick, but ’e wouldn’t.

“ ‘ It can’t be done now,’ he ses ; ‘ and I warn you that if that pistol is fired I won’t be responsible for what’ll ’appen.’

“ ‘ George Kettle shall load the pistol and fire it if ’e won’t,’ ses Bob Pretty. ‘ ’Aving been in the Militia, there couldn’t be a better man for the job.’

“ George Kettle walked up to the table as red as fire at being praised like that afore people and started loading the pistol. He seemed to be more awkward about it than the conjurer ’ad been the last time, and he ’ad to roll the watch-cases up with the flat-iron afore ’e could get ’em in. But ’e loaded it at last and stood waiting.

“ ‘ Don’t shoot at me, George Kettle,’ ses Bob. ‘ I’ve been called a thief once, and I don’t want to be agin.’

“ ‘ Put that pistol down, you fool, afore you do mischief,’ ses the conjurer.

“ ‘ Who shall I shoot at ? ’ ses George Kettle, raising the pistol.

“ ‘ Better fire at the conjurer, I think,’ ses Bob Pretty ; ‘ and if things ’appen as he says they will ’appen, the watch ought to be found in ’is coat-pocket.’

“ ‘ Where is he ? ’ says George, looking round.

“ Bill Chambers laid ’old of ’im just as he was going through the door to fetch the landlord, and the scream ’e gave as he came back and George Kettle pointed the pistol at ’im was awful.

“ ‘ Don’t be silly,’ ses George. ‘ Nobody’s going to hurt you.’

“ ‘ It’s no worse for you than it was for me,’ ses Bob.

“ ‘ Put it down,’ screams the conjurer ; ‘ put it down. You’ll kill ’arf the men in the room if it goes off.’

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“ ‘ Be careful where you aim, George,’ ses Sam Jones. ‘ P’r’aps he’d better ’ave a chair all by hisself in the middle of the room.’ ”

“ It was all very well for Sam Jones to talk, but the conjurer wouldn’t sit on a chair by ’imself. He wouldn’t sit on it at all. He seemed to be all legs and arms, and the way ’e struggled it took four or five men to ’old ’im.

“ ‘ Why don’t you keep still ? ’ ses John Biggs. ‘ George Kettle’ll shoot it in your pocket all right. He’s the best shot in Claybury.’ ”

“ ‘ Help ! Murder ! ’ says the conjurer, struggling. ‘ He’ll kill me. Nobody can do the trick but me.’ ”

“ ‘ But you say you won’t do it,’ ses John Biggs.

“ ‘ Not now,’ ses the conjurer ; ‘ I can’t.’ ”

“ ‘ Well, I’m not going to ’ave my watch lost through want of trying,’ ses John Biggs. ‘ Tie ’im to the chair, mates.’ ”

“ ‘ All right, then,’ ses the conjurer, very pale. ‘ Don’t tie me ; I’ll sit still all right if you like, but you’d better bring the chair outside in case of accidents. Bring it in the front.’ ”

“ George Kettle said it was all nonsense, but the conjurer said the trick was always better done in the open air, and at last they gave way and took ’im and the chair outside.

“ ‘ Now,’ ses the conjurer, as ’e sat down, ‘ all of you go and stand near the man wot’s going to shoot. When I say “ Three,” fire. *Why ! there’s the watch on the ground there !* ’ ”

“ He pointed with ’is finger, and as they all looked down he jumped up out o’ that chair and set off on the road to Wickham as ’ard as ’e could run. It was so sudden that nobody knew wot ’ad ’appened for a moment, and then George Kettle, wot ’ad been looking with the rest, turned round and pulled the trigger.

“ There was a bang that pretty nigh deafened us, and

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the back o' the chair was blown nearly out. By the time we'd got our senses agin the conjurer was a'most out o' sight, and Bob Pretty was explaining to John Biggs wot a good job it was 'is watch 'adn't been a gold one.

“ ‘ That's wot comes o' trusting a foreigner afore a man wot you've known all your life,' he ses, shaking his 'ead. ‘ I 'ope the next man that tries to take my good name away won't get off so easy. I felt all along the trick couldn't be done ; it stands to reason it couldn't. I done my best, too.' ”

W. W. JACOBS

## NOTES

*A Vintner.* From "Characters," by Samuel Butler.

Samuel Butler (1612-1680), author of "Hudibras," the brilliant and biting satiric poem on the Puritans, was born in Worcestershire, the son of a farmer. He seems to have served as an attendant in noble households, enjoyed the patronage of George Villiers, second Duke of Buckingham, and in consequence of "Hudibras" was rewarded by Charles II with a pension.

- P. 3, l. 2. *Hangs out his bush*: the expression "good wine needs no bush," meaning that a really good article needs no advertisement, comes from the custom in former days of an ivy-bush (once considered sacred to Bacchus) being hung outside taverns and private houses to show that wine could be bought there.
- l. 13. "*In vino veritas*": "vulgoque veritas jam attributa vino est," "It is an old proverb that there is truth in wine" (i.e. that men betray their secret thoughts when they are drunk).—Pliny.
- ll. 15-16. *As cunningly as Apelles did grapes*: Apelles, the famous Greek painter, lived in the time of Alexander the Great, who admired him so much that he refused to let anyone else paint his portrait. Apelles painted so realistic a picture of grapes that birds were said to come and peck at the canvas.
- l. 26. *A Jesuit*: the society of Jesuits was founded by St. Ignatius Loyola in 1534. The Jesuits bound themselves to self-renunciation and to supporting the Roman Church against the sixteenth-century reformers, and provoked a good deal of satire from those who did not share their views.

*A Glimpse of Queen Victoria.* From "Streaks of Life," by Dame Ethel Smyth.

Among the most notable musical works of Dame Ethel Smyth, Mus.Doc., are her two operas, "The Wreckers" and "The Boatswain's Mate," and her Mass in D. She

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has laboured unceasingly to promote the cause of music in England, and was also formerly an enthusiast for female suffrage.

The incident here described happened at Balmoral, Queen Victoria having asked the Empress Eugénie to bring Dame Ethel Smyth to dine there. Dame Ethel was staying at the time with the Empress, who was anxious to secure Royal sympathy for her musical projects.

P. 4, l. 14. *The Empress Eugénie* : wife of Napoleon III : she was joined by her exiled husband at Chislehurst, Kent, where he resided till his death in 1873.

l. 31. *When we left the dinner-table* : Dame Ethel Smyth dined with the Household, and was not received by the Queen till after dinner in the drawing-room.

P. 5, l. 37—p. 6, l. 1. *A Brobdingnagian spider* : Brobdingnag was the country of giants to which Gulliver travelled.

*The Beggar*. From "Wit and Humour," by William Hazlitt.

William Hazlitt (1778–1830), one of the most incisive of English critics, wrote on art, politics, the drama, and miscellaneous subjects. His fame rests chiefly on his literary criticism, which includes "Characters of Shakespeare's Plays," "Lectures on the English Poets," and "English Comic Writers."

*My Tailor*. From "Further Foolishness," by Stephen Leacock.

Stephen Leacock, famous for his humorous stories, is also Head of the Department of Political Economy at McGill University, Montreal.

*The Schoolmaster*. From "The Essays of Elia," by Charles Lamb.

Charles Lamb (1775–1834). Sir Walter Raleigh said of Charles Lamb, critic, poet, and best loved of English essayists, that he was less an author than a person.

P. 6, l. 15. *As sacred a carpet as exists outside Mohammedanism* : this refers to the Holy Carpet which used to be manufactured in Cairo as a covering for the Kaaba at Mecca. Every year the new one was taken in procession through Cairo before the caravan of pilgrims left with it for Mecca.

P. 11, l. 10. *Ortelius* : the Latin name of Abraham Ortel (1527–1598), the German-born geographer, who lived at Antwerp.

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- l. 11. *Arrowsmith* : John Arrowsmith (1790-1873) was an original member of the Royal Geographical Society and published many maps.
- l. 15. *Van Diemen's Land* : now Tasmania.
- ll. 18-19. *The Bear or Charles's Wain* : Charles's Wain was a popular name for a group of seven stars called the Great Bear which form the outline of a wheelbarrow or wagon. Charles stands for Charlemagne, and wain a wagon.
- l. 33. *Shepherd kings* : the dynasty of the Hyksos, Arab kings who ruled Egypt for over two hundred years.
- P. 12, ll. 2-3. *A better man than myself* : i.e. Shakespeare.
- l. 3. "*Small Latin and less Greek*" : Ben Jonson uses this phrase with reference to Shakespeare.
- l. 8. "*On Devon's leafy shores*" : from Wordsworth's "Excursion."
- l. 27. *Shacklewell* : a district of North London, now part of Stoke Newington.
- P. 13, ll. 26-27. *What song the Sirens sang* : Ulysses knew that the Sirens sang so enchantingly that they lured all who heard them and then left them to starve. He therefore stopped the ears of his companions with wax while they sailed past the island of the Sirens and had himself lashed to the mast of his ship. "Odyssey," Book XII.
- ll. 27-28. *What name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among women* : Thetis sent Achilles, her son, to the court of Lycomedes, where he adopted female dress and served among the female attendants, in order to prevent him going to perish in the Trojan War. He assumed the name of Pyrrha on account of his golden hair.
- ll. 28-29. *Sir Thomas Browne* : (1605-1682), the physician and author of "*Religio medici*" and "*Hydriotaphia : Urn Burial*."
- P. 14, l. 8. *North Pole Expedition* : possibly Franklin's (1819-1822).
- Mr. Ramsbottom*. From "Faraway," by J. B. Priestley.
- J. B. Priestley (1894), novelist, essayist, and dramatist, was born at Bradford and was educated at Bradford and Cambridge. During the War he served with the Duke of Wellington's and Devon regiments. He has written critical studies of Peacock and George Meredith, has contributed essays regularly to the weekly reviews, has written successful plays, and by the publication of "*The Good Companions*," "*Angel Pavement*," and

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"Faraway," has established himself as one of the most popular and successful present-day novelists, and one whose work lays claim to be considered as permanent literature.

*The Man in Black.* From "A Citizen of the World," by Oliver Goldsmith.

Dr. Johnson said of Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774), poet, novelist, dramatist, essayist, genius, humorist, fool, and saint, that "he touched nothing which he did not adorn."

P. 22, l. 12. *Humorist* : here means eccentric.

*Mr. Tulliver and his Relatives.* From "The Mill on the Floss," by George Eliot.

George Eliot—the pen name of Mary Ann Evans (1819-1880), wife of J. W. Cross—is one of the greatest of women novelists. Her novels, which include "Scenes of Clerical Life," "The Mill on the Floss," "Silas Marner," and "Middlemarch," have considerable power, keen humour, and suppressed passion. Her work is marked by a certain degree of religious and political prejudice.

P. 26, l. 20. *Obfuscated* : (Lat. *fuscare*, to darken) to be in the dark, confused.

P. 27, l. 22. *Swinging* : swingeing, enormous.

*Tennyson at Farringford.* From "Tennyson," by Harold Nicolson.

The Hon. Harold Nicolson, C.M.G., critic and biographer, was formerly in the Diplomatic Service and married the Hon. Victoria Mary Sackville-West, novelist and poet. His works include "Tennyson," "Byron, The Last Journey," "Swinburne," "Some People," and "Lord Carnock," the life of his father.

P. 32, l. 29. *Yarmouth* : in the Isle of Wight.

P. 34, l. 14. *Mr. Gosse* : later Sir Edmund Gosse, the distinguished critic and biographer, and librarian to the House of Lords. His Life of Swinburne is among his most notable works, and the weekly literary critiques which he contributed for many years to "The Sunday Times" became one of the most appreciated features of the paper.

ll. 26-27. *Mrs. Asquith* : Margot Asquith, or Lady Oxford as she became, distinguished both on account

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of her husband's historic career and because of her own brilliant talents, social and literary.

- l. 28. *Henry James* : philosopher and novelist, born in New York in 1843. The extreme subtlety both of his ideas and style has prevented him from enjoying wide popularity.

P. 35, l. 13. "*And the poet,*" etc. : from Tennyson's "*The Epic.*"

P. 36, ll. 3-4. *Bayard Taylor* : Bayard Taylor was born in Chester county, Penn., in 1825. He travelled widely, and was a poet, journalist, novelist, and diplomatist. He died in Berlin, where he was ambassador. In 1884 he published his "*Life and Letters.*"

P. 37, l. 1. *Ellen Terry* : Dame Ellen Terry, one of the most distinguished and admired of English actresses, made memorable successes when she was associated with Sir Henry Irving at the Lyceum. She died in 1928.

*John Bull.* From "*Essays,*" by Washington Irving.

Washington Irving (1783-1859), the son of an Englishman, was born in New York. He studied for the American bar, which he abandoned for business. He was unsuccessful in business, but won fame as an author, and also served as Minister in Spain, and as Secretary to the United States Legation in London. His greatest work is his "*Life of George Washington,*" but he is perhaps best known for his collection of essays called "*The Sketch-Book.*"

P. 37, l. 14. *John Bull* : the name John Bull, which has come to denote a typical Englishman, occurs first in Dr. Arbuthnot's satire, "*The History of John Bull,*" published in 1712. Arbuthnot's purpose was to advocate the ending of the war with France. John Bull in Arbuthnot's work was the Englishman, Lewis Baboon the Frenchman, Nicholas Frog the Dutchman, and Lord Strutt Philip of Spain.

P. 38, l. 25. *Bow bells* : the bells of the London Church St. Mary-le-Bow, so named because of the bows of its steeple.

P. 41, ll. 12-13. "*Gentlemen of the fancy*" : "*fancy*" was formerly used of any act or amusement for which enthusiasm was felt, and it was applied to sportsmen in general, and to followers of pugilism in particular.

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*The Business Man.* From "Pastiche and Prejudice," by A. B. Walkley.

A. B. Walkley, a high official in the Civil Service, won fame as dramatic critic of "The Times," to which he contributed for many years over the initials A. B. W.

P. 50, l. 25. *Gentleman in cocked hat* : the beadle.

l. 29. *Sir Gerald du Maurier* : the late Sir Gerald du Maurier, the popular actor and actor-manager, was the son of George du Maurier, the author and artist.

P. 51, l. 3. *A motley to the view* : from Shakespeare's Sonnets, CX. l. 2.

ll. 10-11. *Maeterlinck speaks of "l'auguste vie quotidienne" of Hamlet* : "the elevated daily life of Hamlet," i.e. Hamlet filled his daily life with high thoughts and affairs and not with trivialities. Maeterlinck, born at Ghent in 1862, author of the famous "Blue Bird," has been called the "Belgian Shakespeare."

l. 19. *Pascal* : (1623-1662), the famous French philosopher and mathematician.

l. 25. *Bishop Butler* : Joseph Butler, Bishop of Durham (1692-1752). From his "Sermons."

l. 30. *Spedding's forehead . . .* : James Spedding (1808-1881) forsook his political career in order to edit and vindicate Bacon. Edward FitzGerald refers to him in his published "Letters." He was a great friend of Tennyson.

P. 53, l. 33. *The sonneteer in Molière* : Oronte in "Le Misanthrope."

ll. 33-34. "*Le temps ne fait rien à l'affaire*" : "Time has nothing to do with the matter," e.g. a poem is not necessarily better because the poet takes a longer time to write it.

*The Two Matches.* From "Fables," by Robert Louis Stevenson.

Among the most famous of the works of Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894), novelist, essayist, and poet, are "Treasure Island," "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," "Virginibus Puerisque," and "A Child's Garden of Verses." After many years of ill-health Stevenson died in Samoa in the South Seas.

P. 57, l. 3. *The Trades* : trade-winds are so called because they blow constantly from the East towards the Equator in the same course or *trade*.

l. 14. *Dottle* : a plug of tobacco left unsmoked in the bottom of a pipe.

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*The King's Encore.* From "A Tramp Abroad," by Mark Twain.

Samuel Langhorne Clemens (1835-1910), who wrote under the pseudonym Mark Twain, was born in Missouri and became a journalist in Nevada. He won fame as a humorist, and his books include "The Innocents Abroad," "A Tramp Abroad," and "Huckleberry Finn."

P. 58, ll. 14-15. *The King of Bavaria is a poet*: Ludwig II (1845-1886), who succeeded to the Bavarian throne in 1864. He neglected state affairs in order to take an extravagant and fantastic interest in the arts and especially in the music of Wagner. He was eventually declared insane and drowned himself in a lake together with his doctor who was attempting to save him.

*Dinner at Doctor Blimber's.* From "Dombey and Son," by Charles Dickens.

Charles Dickens (1812-1870) is acknowledged to be first among English humorists and his "Pickwick Papers" is one of the greatest humorous books of the world.

P. 60, l. 32. *Elephant and castle*: alluding to the popular old inn sign of an elephant with a little castle on its back.

P. 62, l. 23. *Vitellius*: Roman Emperor from January 2 to December 22, A.D. 69. His vices had formerly made him a favourite with Tiberius, Caligula, and Nero, and when he became Emperor he spent vast sums on fantastic banquets. He was finally arrested in his own palace by the supporters of Vespasian and put to an ignominious death.

P. 63, l. 1. *Fish called scari*: scari, salt-water fishes, were a very popular Roman dish.

l. 8. *Titus*: Titus Flavius Sabinus Vespasianus, Roman Emperor, A.D. 79-81, who when told at the end of a day that he had benefited no one, exclaimed, "I have lost a day." Among his fine achievements he completed the Colosseum and the famous Baths of Titus.

l. 11. *Domitian*: the tyrannical and vicious Emperor who succeeded Titus, and under whom the Romans were severely defeated by the Dacians.

l. 13. *Nero*: the most notoriously wicked of the Roman Emperors, who was suspected—probably falsely—of causing the great fire at Rome. He threw the blame

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on the Christians, numbers of whom were put to a cruel death. He was Emperor A.D. 54-68.

*Tiberius* : Emperor of Rome, A.D. 14-37. Tiberius was of a suspicious and cruel nature, but had military courage. He transferred the power of electing magistrates from the people's assembly to the senate.

*Caligula* : Roman Emperor, A.D. 37-41 : he became mad, raised his horse to the consulship, and having drawn up his army in battle array on the seashore, commanded them to collect shells.

*Heliogabalus* : Roman Emperor, A.D. 218-222. He proclaimed his cousin Alexander Severus Caesar, and then in jealousy attempted to kill him : the soldiers, however, preferring Alexander, put Heliogabalus to death.

*The Building of the Albert Memorial.* From "Queen Victoria," by Lytton Strachey.

G. L. Strachey, LL.D. (1880-1932), was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, and made a wide reputation on the publication in 1918 of "Eminent Victorians." Strachey's finest biography is probably his "Queen Victoria." He treats history as material for artistic creation rather than for the purpose of scientific record. He is called cynical by those who do not sufficiently perceive his passion for truth and the strange romantic vein which is mingled with his satire.

P. 64, l. 24. *Obelisk* : a tapering upright pillar which ends in a small pyramid.

l. 27. *Monolith* : (*μόνος*, single : *λίθος*, a stone), a block made out of a single stone.

P. 65, l. 15. *Gothic style* : the Gothic style in architecture developed in northern France between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries and spread through western Europe : it is characterised by high-pointed arches.

l. 29. *Pillar-mullions* : mullions are upright bars between panels, lights of windows, etc.

l. 30. *Dormers* : perpendicular windows on a sloping roof.

P. 67, l. 1. *Ciborium* : a canopy supported by four columns to cover some object of veneration such as an altar.

ll. 14-15. *The Great Exhibition* : held in Hyde Park in 1851, graphically described by Hugh Walpole in "The Fortress."

l. 29. *Alto-relievo* : high relief.

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P. 68, l. 16. *Mosaics* : pieces of coloured material set in patterns.

l. 23. *Physiology* : the science of life and living organisms.

*A Family Argument.* From "Pride and Prejudice," by Jane Austen.

Not everyone appreciates with equal enthusiasm the delicate irony of Jane Austen (1775-1817), but those who come under her spell are a devoted company, as Kipling describes in "The Jancites." Sir Walter Raleigh said of those who do not appreciate Jane Austen that they ought to be in her books rather than reading them.

*Jubilee Day.* From "Told by an Idiot," by Rose Macaulay.

Among the most popular of Miss Rose Macaulay's novels have been "Potterism," "Dangerous Ages," and "Told by an Idiot." She is a descendant of Lord Macaulay.

P. 75, l. 4. *Jubilee Day* : June 20, 1897.

P. 76, l. 4. *Hierophants* : priests in Ancient Greece who expounded sacred mysteries.

P. 79, l. 5. *Kipling* : in reference to his poem "Bobs" and many allusions in his soldier tales.

l. 7. *Lord Charles Beresford* : First Lord of the Admiralty, 1886-1888; Admiral in Command of the Mediterranean Fleet, 1905-1907.

P. 80, l. 1. *Sir Purtab Singh* : Maharaja of Idar, a famous Indian soldier and statesman.

ll. 9-10. *Dr. Jim and his raid* : through the influence of Cecil Rhodes, Dr. Jameson (later Sir Leander Starr Jameson, C.B.), or "Dr. Jim" as he was called, was made administrator for the South African Company. When trouble arose between the Uitlanders and the Boer Government Jameson set out to support the Uitlanders with a force of 500 troopers. This force was overpowered by the Boers, and Dr. Jameson, having been handed over to the British authorities, was sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment.

l. 10. *Cecil Rhodes* : (1852-1902), the maker of modern South Africa, from whom Rhodesia takes its name.

ll. 24-25. *Papal Nuncio* : the title of the Pope's ambassador.

ll. 30-31. *Lord Wolseley* : Commander-in-chief 1895-1900.

P. 82, l. 2. *Blondin on his rope* : Blondin, the celebrated tight-rope walker, was born near Calais in 1824, and

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died at Ealing in 1897. He crossed Niagara on a tight-rope before 50,000 spectators and later repeated the performance blindfold and pushing a wheelbarrow : in 1860 he crossed Niagara on stilts.

*Visiting at Cranford.* From "Cranford," by Mrs. Gaskell.

Mrs. Gaskell (1810-1865) contributed "Cranford" in instalments to "Household Words," a weekly periodical started by Dickens. She also wrote a notable "Life of Charlotte Brontë."

P. 84, l. 34. *Queen Adelaide* : wife of William IV, who married her in 1818 when he was Duke of Clarence. She was daughter of the Duke of Saxe-Coburg Meiningen.

P. 86, l. 22. *Preference* : a card game not unlike whist in which each player bids so as to be able to name the trump.

P. 89, ll. 28-29. "*Ci-devant*" *Miss Hoggins* : the former Miss Hoggins.

P. 92, l. 10. *Cribbage* : a card game in which several players aim at making various counting combinations. The dealer has an extra pack called the crib.

l. 15. *Spadille* : the ace of spades.

*Manille* : the second-best trump.

l. 31. "*Basting*" : beating at the game.

P. 95, l. 13. *Hogarth's pictures* : William Hogarth (1697-1764), in addition to his fame as a painter, is especially celebrated for his social cartoons such as "The Rake's Progress," "Marriage à la Mode," and "The Election."

*A Village Celebration.* From "If I May," by A. A. Milne.

A. A. Milne contributed for many years over the initials A. A. M. to "Punch" and became assistant editor between 1906 and 1914. During the War he served in the Royal Warwickshire Regiment. He was educated at Westminster and Trinity College, Cambridge, and is author of "The Day's Play," "Not that it Matters," "If I May," "When We were Very Young," "Winnie-the-Pooh," "Four Days' Wonder," etc., and the following plays—"Wurzel Flummery," "Mr. Pim Passes By," "The Truth about Blayds," "The Dover Road," "Success," "Michael and Mary," etc.

P. 96, l. 33. *Augustus James* : She is thinking of Augustus John.

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*A Pious Hyperbole.* From "The King's Mirror," by Anthony Hope.

Anthony Hope Hawkins (1863-1933), novelist and playwright, in addition to "The King's Mirror," wrote "The Prisoner of Zenda," "Rupert of Hentzau," and "The Dolly Dialogues."

P. 100, l. 27. *The Arabian Nights*: "The Arabian Nights' Entertainments; or, The Thousand and One Nights," stories originally written in Arabic, were translated into English in 1840. A king is supposed to have killed his wives on the morning after marriage until the clever and inventive Scheherazade saves herself by the enthralling tales which she tells to the king.

*The Disarmament Commission.* From "England, their England," by A. G. Macdonell.

A. G. Macdonell made a considerable hit in 1933 with "England, their England," which was his first book: it is a humorous, light-hearted, and perspicacious satire on typical aspects of English life. He has since written a history of Napoleon's marshals.

P. 109, ll. 22-23. "*The France of Charlemagne, of Gambetta, of Boulanger*": Charlemagne, or Charles the Great, son of Pepin the Short and grandson of Charles Martel, was Emperor of the West 800-814, and king of the Franks 768-814. Gambetta (1838-1882) was the famous French statesman who, after the surrender of Napoleon III at Sedan, was one of those who proclaimed a republic: Boulanger (1837-1891) was the French general who embodied the "revenge" policy supported by the Royalists.

*Longer Sermons.* From "The Times," by Anon.

"Longer Sermons" is taken from among those third or fourth Leading Articles in "The Times" which have made a reputation of recent years for their quiet and effective wit.

P. 114, ll. 14-15. *Eutychus, who fell asleep*: Eutychus fell asleep while St. Paul was preaching at Troas: *vide* Acts xx. 9.

l. 16. *Sydney Smith*: the writings of Sydney Smith (1771-1845), a Canon of St. Paul's, were chiefly of a miscellaneous and political nature. He was noted as a wit, and his "Wit and Wisdom" was published in 1861.

ll. 19-20. *The illustrious Bonivard*: François de Bonivard

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(1493–1570), Prior of St. Victor at Geneva, who, being suspected of republicanism by the Duke of Saxony, was imprisoned in the castle of Chillon, by the Lake of Geneva. Lord Byron wrote his poem “The Prisoner of Chillon” on this subject.

*On Being a Jonah.* From “Life at the Mermaid,” by Sir John Squire.

Sir John Squire, critic, essayist, poet, and Editor of “The London Mercury,” was knighted in 1933 for his services to literature and the arts, in which he has always stood for sensibility combined with sanity.

P. 115, l. 3. *The prophet Jonah* : our knowledge of Jonah rests solely upon the short Book of Jonah and a reference to him in 2 Kings xiv. 25.

P. 116, l. 4. *Jettisoned* : to jettison (Fr. *jeter*) is to throw goods overboard to lighten a ship which is in difficulties.

l. 31. *Esperantists* : Zamenhof, a Russian oculist, endeavoured to devise a universal language based on the chief European languages and published his first proposals in 1887. He called his language Esperanto, indicating hopefulness.

P. 117, l. 18. *Quid* : a plug of tobacco to be chewed.

l. 20. *Stevenson's young man* : a character in “The Wrong Box,” who was somewhat discouraged by the learned appearance of the “Athenaeum,” then a famous literary weekly.

P. 118, l. 4. *Herbert Spencer* : (1820–1903), the founder of evolutionary philosophy.

l. 9. *Gordian knot* : Gordius, the peasant King of Phrygia, consecrated his wagon to Jupiter and tied the knot with which the yoke was fastened to the pole so artfully that it was said that whoever could untie it would be King of Asia. Alexander the Great, when shown the knot, cut it through with his sword.

l. 10. *Taffrail* : the rail running round the stern of a ship.

*A Meditation upon a Broomstick.* From “Miscellaneous Essays,” by Jonathan Swift.

For sustained power of thought and excellence of expression Dean Swift (1667–1745) is usually considered to be the greatest master of English prose. Sir Walter Scott published his edition of Swift's works in nineteen volumes in 1814.

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*Literature.* From "Essays and Observations," by Lord Hewart.

Lord Hewart of Bury, 1st Baron (created 1922), has been Lord Chief Justice of England since 1922. He was Solicitor-General 1916-1919, Attorney-General 1919-1922, and one of the Cabinet Ministers who signed the Irish Peace Treaty in 1921. His "Essays and Observations" was published in 1930.

P. 122, ll. 20-21. "*Sunt lacrimae rerum*" : "*Sunt lacrimae rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt.*"—Virgil, "Aeneid," i. 462. "There are tears in our history, and human sufferings touch the human heart."

l. 22. *Crocodiles have theirs* : crocodiles are supposed to moan as though they are in distress in order to lure travellers in their direction, and to weep tears while devouring their prey.

l. 34. *Local option* : a proposal for giving a majority of ratepayers power to prohibit the sale of intoxicants.

P. 123, l. 23. "*Oh no ! oh no !*" : From a skit contributed by Thackeray to a Cambridge magazine, "The Snob," on the subject set for the poem for the Chancellor's Medal in 1829. The prize poem was written by Tennyson.

P. 125, l. 8. *Pindar's Odes* : the typical English Ode with its irregular number of feet and disposition of rhymes is modelled on the triumphal Odes of Pindar, 552-442 B.C., the Theban poet.

l. 21. "*But the fair guerdon . . .*" : Milton's "Lycidas," ll. 73-77.

*Recipe for an Epic Poem.* From "The Guardian," by Alexander Pope.

Alexander Pope (1688-1744) in his poetry brought the English heroic couplet to the highest pitch of brilliance, lucidity, and perfection : his prose, which consists chiefly of "Letters," is of secondary importance but contains the same qualities of ease and polish.

P. 126, ll. 19-20. *Geoffrey of Monmouth* : Geoffrey of Monmouth (1100-1154), probably a Benedictine monk, wrote "Historia Regum Britanniae," which undertakes to give the history of the kings of Britain before Christ, and also of King Arthur.

l. 20. *Don Belianis of Greece* : the hero of an old romantic tale of chivalry, which was one of the books in Don Quixote's library.

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P. 127, l. 26. *Tasso* : Torquato Tasso (1544-1595), the Italian poet who lived at the court of Ferrara and whose works include "Jerusalem Delivered," "Aminta," and the epic "Rinaldo."

P. 128, ll. 4-5. *Eurus, Zephyr, Auster, and Boreas* : the east, west, south, and north winds respectively.

ll. 6-7. *Quantum sufficit* : as much as suffices, used in medical prescriptions.

l. 22. *Succedaneum* : substitute.

*Jargon*. From "On the Art of Writing," by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch (1863), critic and novelist, has been Professor of English Literature at Cambridge University since 1912. He has always set himself, like the late Professor Sir Walter Raleigh, to bring literature to the test of life. He is a Cornishman by birth, and his home is at Fowey.

P. 129, l. 15. *Douce* : steady, quiet, comfortable.

P. 130, l. 11. *Respectability in Chicago* : probably one of the ironical comments of a popular Irish-American character, Mr. Dooley, invented by a Chicago humorist, P. F. Dunne.

P. 132, ll. 17-18. "*In Heaven yclept Metonymy*" : metonymy is the use of a word for another which suggests it, *i.e.* "He enjoys Dickens" for "he enjoys the books of Dickens." "*In Heaven yclept Euphrosyne*," Milton's "*L'Allegro*," l. 12.

P. 133, l. 21. *Aintree course* : where the Grand National steeplechase is run.

P. 134, l. 27. *Sancho Panza* : Don Quixote's little squat squire in Cervantes's story.

P. 135, l. 20. *Mr. Lamond* : Frederic Lamond, the pianist and composer, was born in Glasgow in 1868, studied in Germany under von Bülow and Liszt, and has a world-wide reputation especially as an interpreter of Beethoven's piano music.

P. 136, l. 18. *Gems, etc.* : from Gray's "Elegy."

*On Nothing*. From "Essays," by Henry Fielding.

In "Tom Jones" Henry Fielding (1707-1754), author also of "Joseph Andrews," "Jonathan Wild the Great," and "Amelia," achieved what is considered by many critics to be the greatest novel in the English language.

P. 138, l. 8. *A hardy wit* : the Earl of Rochester (1647-1680), who wrote a fine poem "Upon Nothing."

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- P. 141, l. 22. "*Fuit haud ignobilis Argis . . .*" : "Once at Argos there was a man of some rank who used to fancy that he was listening to wonderful tragic actors while he sat happy and applauded in the empty theatre."—Horace, "Epistles," ii. II. 2, 128–130.
- P. 142, l. 22. *One of the wisest*, etc. : probably Pyrrho, the Greek sceptic philosopher.
- P. 143, l. 23. *Ab effectu* : from their productions.
- P. 145, l. 4. *Syllogism* : a term in Logic used of a formal argument which consists of a major premise, a minor premise, and a conclusion, i.e. All crimes are wicked, murder is a crime, therefore murder is wicked.
- P. 147, l. 27. *The great Mr. Hobbes* : Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), the rationalistic philosopher, author of "The Leviathan," in which he expresses his political theories.

*Modernising Shakespeare.* From "The Observer," by St. John Ervine.

St. John Ervine (1883), dramatist, novelist, and critic, has for many years been associated with "The Observer," of which he was dramatic critic, and has written a number of plays of outstanding quality, including "Mixed Marriage," "Jane Clegg," "The Ship," and "The First Mrs. Fraser."

- P. 150, ll. 28–29. *Those who lately murdered the Lindbergh baby* : the conscience not only of America but of the whole civilised world was deeply shocked by the kidnapping and murder of the baby of Colonel Lindbergh, the famous American aviator.
- P. 151, l. 13. *Botticelli* : Sandro Botticelli (1444–1510), the famous Florentine painter, excelled equally in classical and devotional pictures. His "Mars and Venus" and his "Nativity," two of his greatest works, may be seen in the National Gallery, London.
- l. 16. *Hollywood* : the centre of the American film-making industry.
- P. 152, l. 20. *The Old Vic.* : thanks to the dauntless industry and enthusiasm of Miss Lilian Baylis, its present manager, the Old Vic. theatre in the Waterloo Road has grown from its humble origin to share with the new Stratford theatre the honour of being the home of Shakespearean drama, and it is only at the Old Vic. and Sadler's Wells, its sister-theatre recently opened, and at Stratford in the summer, that one can count

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

on seeing regular Shakespearean productions of high quality.

- l. 27. *Trotsky* : Leo Trotsky, the son of a Jewish chemist, together with Lenin, contrived and led the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, and after the Revolution became Commissary for Foreign Affairs.

*Kerensky* : Alexander Kerensky, a leader in the Russian Revolution, became Minister of Justice and later Premier. He was eventually deposed by the Bolsheviks, who regarded his policy as too moderate.

- P. 155, l. 31. *The fault, dear Brutus* :

“The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,  
But in ourselves, that we are underlings.”

—“Julius Caesar,” I. II. 140, 141.

Sir James Barrie named his play “Dear Brutus,” in which various characters who have been failures in life are given a second chance but make the same errors.

*Travellers*. From “A Sentimental Journey,” by Laurence Sterne.

Laurence Sterne (1713–1768), curate of Coxwold, is celebrated for his two novels, “Tristram Shandy” and “A Sentimental Journey” : both books are marked by extraordinary antics of style and an excess of sentiment, but show a keen penetration of character and endless mental ingenuity.

- P. 157, l. 9. *Peregrine* : foreign, journeying abroad.

- P. 160, l. 17. *Vis-à-vis* : a vehicle in which the passengers sit opposite to one another.

*On Lying in Bed*. From “Tremendous Trifles,” by G. K. Chesterton.

G. K. Chesterton (1874), educated at St. Paul’s School and the Slade School of Art, is famous for his brilliance and wit allied to great common sense and good-humour. He is a prolific writer on literary and social subjects, and is a poet and dramatist as well as an essayist and critic. “The Napoleon of Notting Hill,” “The Innocence of Father Brown,” his “Collected Poems,” and the play “Magic” are especially notable among his numerous works.

- P. 160, l. 26. *Aspinall* : the name of a firm which makes enamel.

*Cyrano de Bergerac* : a seventeenth-century French author who fought innumerable duels on account of his ex-

## NOTES

- cessively large nose. Rostand's fine play, "Cyrano de Bergerac" (1898), made the original Cyrano famous.
- P. 161, ll. 7-8. "*Il me faut des géants*": "I must have giants."
- P. 162, ll. 7-8. *Debarred from all political rights*: written before women had the vote.
- ll. 15-18. *Michael Angelo . . . Sistine Chapel*: the roof of the Sistine Chapel, the Pope's private chapel in the Vatican at Rome, is decorated with magnificent frescoes by Michael Angelo depicting scenes from the Old Testament which introduce the human ancestors of Christ.
- l. 36. *Ibsenite pessimists*: the satirical problem-plays of Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906), the Norwegian dramatist, deal largely with the disastrous effect on the individual of environment and heredity.
- The State-Coach*. From "The English Mail-Coach," by Thomas De Quincey.
- The prose of Thomas De Quincey (1785-1859), author of "Confessions of an English Opium-Eater," "The English Mail-Coach," "Murder considered as One of the Fine Arts," etc., is notable, when the author is inspired, for its opulent beauty and imaginative power.
- P. 168, l. 10. *Jury-reins*: as in "jury-masts," something rigged up in an emergency.
- The Anarchists*. From "The Lighter Side of School Life," by Ian Hay.
- Ian Hay—the pen-name of Major John Hay Beith, C.B.E., has made many popular successes as a novelist and playwright: his works include "Pip," "A Man's Man," "The First Hundred Thousand," "Tilly of Bloomsbury," and "The Sport of Kings." During the war Major Beith served with the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders.
- P. 172, l. 27. *Corpus vile*: alluding to *Fiat experimentum in corpus vile*, Make your experiments on something of no value.
- Commodore Trunnion's Wedding*. From "Peregrine Pickle," by Tobias Smollett.
- Tobias Smollett (1721-1771), surgeon and novelist, author of "Roderick Random," "Peregrine Pickle," and "Humphry Clinker," is an obvious precursor of Dickens in the art of humorous fiction.

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

P. 173, l. 24. *Commodore* : a rank in the British navy between that of captain and rear-admiral.

P. 177, ll. 33-34. *Lanthorn jaws* : long, thin jaws.

*Harris in the Maze*. From "Three Men in a Boat," by Jerome K. Jerome.

Jerome K. Jerome (1859-1927), schoolmaster, actor, and author, became famous through his humorous story "Three Men in a Boat" and his serious play "The Passing of the Third Floor Back."

P. 181, l. 24. *Hampton Court* : Hampton Court was built by Cardinal Wolsey—from whom Henry VIII took it—and rebuilt by Wren in the reign of William III. The famous Maze is still as great an attraction to visitors as when "Three Men in a Boat" was written.

*A Drive in Rügen*. From "Adventures of Elizabeth in Rügen."

The author, who is now Countess Russell, made a notable success by the publication of the anonymous "Elizabeth and her German Garden" in 1898, which was followed by "Adventures of Elizabeth in Rügen."

P. 184, l. 17. *Rügen* : an island in Prussia off the north-west coast of Pomerania.

P. 187, l. 7. *Chaussée trees* : trees bordering a high-road.

P. 188, l. 34. *Kalbsschnitzel* : a veal cutlet.

P. 192, l. 27. *Sister Annes* : Sister Anne looked out of the window to see if anyone was coming to rescue Fatima from Bluebeard.

P. 195, ll. 24-25. "*Halt ! . . . Es ist verboten ! Schritt !*" : "Stop . . . that's not allowed ! Go at a walk !"

P. 196, l. 27. *A Herrschaft* : a lady or gentleman.

*The Adventures of a Shilling*. From "Essays," by Joseph Addison.

Joseph Addison (1672-1719) was educated at the Charterhouse and at Queen's College, Oxford, and Magdalen, of which he was made a Fellow. He was appointed Under-Secretary of State in 1706, and was a member of Parliament for the last eleven years of his life. He contributed many papers to Steele's "Tatler," and joined with Steele in producing the "Spectator."

P. 199, l. 1. *Ingot* : a mass of metal cast into any convenient shape.

l. 26. *Sack* : a dry white wine popular in Elizabethan days.

## NOTES

- l. 34. *A Templar* : the Templars were knights so called originally because they were appointed to guard pilgrims bound for Jerusalem by Baldwin, King of Jerusalem, and were given accommodation in his palace, which stood near the Temple.
  - ll. 34-35. *A twelpenny ordinary* : a meal served to all customers at the regular price of twelpence.
  - ll. 35-36. *Westminster Hall* : Westminster Hall, which is part of the old Westminster Palace, was built by William Rufus and greatly renovated by Richard II. It was formerly the meeting-place for parliaments, and was also the scene of famous trials and of royal festivities.
  - P. 200, l. 36. *Squir* : to throw away with a jerk.
  - P. 201, ll. 11-12. *Monstrous pair of breeches* : the shields on Commonwealth coins were said to have this appearance.
  - P. 202, l. 7. *Change of sex* : probably after being melted down the shilling now bore a king's head instead of Elizabeth's.
  - l. 16. *The Splendid Shilling* : by John Philips (1676-1709).
- Trinket's Colt.* From "Some Experiences of an Irish R.M.," by E. Æ. Somerville and Martin Ross.
- Miss Edith Ænone Somerville (1861), Master of the West Carbery Foxhounds, and her cousin Violet Martin ("Martin Ross," 1865-1911) have written a number of incomparable books in collaboration, revealing the charm, humour, and pathos of Irish life. "Some Experiences of an Irish R.M.," the book with which they first made a wide reputation, was published in 1899, and is written, like all their works, in prose of extraordinary perfection.
- P. 204, l. 1. *A bimetallist* : bimetallism is the policy of employing two metals to form in combination at the same time a standard of value for currency.
  - P. 205, ll. 5-6. *Shandrydan* : an old-fashioned Irish gig.
  - P. 208, l. 28. *On the spindle side* : in the female line. "Spinster" is another word which refers to spinning as essentially woman's work.
  - P. 210, l. 7. *Tony Lumpkin* : the cheerful booby son of Mrs. Hardcastle in Goldsmith's comedy "She Stoops to Conquer."
  - P. 212, l. 30. *Ventre-d-terre* : literally, because he actually *was* crawling on his stomach.
  - P. 216, l. 11. *Curby* : afflicted with swellings in the legs.

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*The Happy Thinker Hunts.* From "Happy Thoughts," by Sir Francis Burnand.

Sir Francis Burnand (1836-1917), author of "Happy Thoughts" and the stage burlesque "Cox and Box," was editor of "Punch," 1880-1906.

P. 219, ll. 9-10. *Antigropelos*: (Greek ἀντί, against; ὑγρός, wet; and πηλός, mud) coverings to protect the leg against mud-spattering.

ll. 15-16. "You gentlemen of England who live at home at ease . . ."

"Ye gentlemen of England  
That live at home at ease,  
Ah! little do you think upon  
The danger of the seas."

—Martyn Parker (circa 1630).

l. 18. *Whole-uncle*: as distinguished from a half-uncle who is another character in the book.

l. 22. *Mazeppa*: Mazeppa, a page in the Polish Court, intrigued with the wife of a Count who discovered the intrigue and had Mazeppa lashed to a wild horse which was released to run wild. After a long career the horse dropped dead in the Ukraine, and Mazeppa, set free by a Cossack and tended, grew up to be a prince in the Ukraine. The story is told by Lord Byron in his poem "Mazeppa."

P. 222, l. 19. *The staggers*: a spinal and cerebral disease which causes a horse to reel and stagger.

*Crossing to France.* From "Diary of a Provincial Lady," by E. M. Delafield.

Miss E. M. Delafield, the *nom de plume* of Elizabeth M. Dashwood, J.P., has made her name both by her novels, which include "The Heel of Achilles," "The Diary of a Provincial Lady" and its sequel "A Provincial Lady Goes Further," "Challenge to Clarissa," and by her play "To See Ourselves." She has contributed regularly to "Punch."

P. 227, l. 11. *The Matterhorn*: the Matterhorn, 14,780 feet in height, rises on the frontier between Switzerland and Italy to the south-west of Zermatt. It was first scaled in 1865 by E. Whymper's party, three of whom perished in the terrible accident which occurred during the descent, owing to a rope breaking. The Matterhorn can be ascended now with comparative ease, the difficult places having chains to assist climbers.

## NOTES

*The Departure of Papa.* From "The Little Dog Laughed," by Leonard Merrick.

The collected works of Leonard Merrick were reissued in 1918 with an Introduction to each book written by most famous writers of the day, including Sir James Barrie, Sir Arthur Pinero, H. G. Wells, and G. K. Chesterton. This was a well-merited tribute to the perfection and delicacy of Mr. Merrick's art.

P. 232, l. 26. *Louis-Philippe* : Philippe Egalité (1773-1850), King of France, who fought in the wars of the Republic, and after the Revolution of 1830 accepted the crown as the elect of the people. The Paris mob, however, rose eventually against him and he had to abdicate and fly to England.

P. 238, l. 28. *Don't fash* : don't worry.

P. 242, l. 3. *Midi* : the South of France.

*Odd Charges.* From "Odd Craft," by W. W. Jacobs.

W. W. Jacobs (1863), author of many stories collected under such titles as "Many Cargoes," "The Skipper's Wooing," "A Master of Craft," "Night Watches," "Odd Craft," is justly regarded as a master of his art, and many of his short humorous tales are masterpieces of construction and wit. He is also capable of writing in a powerfully macabre vein, as in his plays "The Monkey's Paw" and "The Ghost of Jerry Bundler."

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## ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. *A Vintner*. Compose, in a style similar to Samuel Butler's, the character of a House Agent.

2. *A Glimpse of Queen Victoria*. Describe the greatest *faux pas* which you have ever made.

3. *The Beggar*. Say what other tricks you have heard of whereby beggars have benefited themselves.

4. *My Tailor*. Compose a study of your Doctor or your Dentist.

5. *The Schoolmaster*. Consider with what justice schoolmasters have been treated by authors, with special reference to this essay of Lamb, and, if possible, with reference to "Mr. Perrin and Mr. Traill," by Hugh Walpole, and "Young Woodley," by John Van Druten.

6. *Mr. Ramsbottom*. Describe any "character" whom you have encountered and become acquainted with, in a hotel, a railway train, or on board ship.

7. *The Man in Black*. To what extent do you like or dislike "The Man in Black"?

8. *Mr. Tulliver and his Relatives*. Describe a consultation on some matter of family importance taking place between your own uncles and aunts; or Consider how far the art of George Eliot still appeals to this generation, and contrast her humour with that of Dickens.

9. *Tennyson at Farringford*. Discuss the view that many of Tennyson's poems which the Victorians admired most appeal to us least; or Consider in what respects Tennyson's poetry, however much it may be criticised, is greater, taken as a whole, than that of any English poet who has written since.

10. *John Bull*. Write an essay on a typical Roman, or Greek, or Frenchman, or German.

11. *The Business Man*. Give your impression of the motorist from the motoring advertisements which you have seen.

12. *The Two Matches*. Write a similar short fable on "The Two Collar Studs."

## AN ANTHOLOGY OF WIT

13. *The King's Encore.* Consider to what extent it was or was not an indication of his madness when the King of Bavaria insisted on having performances of Wagner's operas given which no one attended except himself.

14. *Dinner at Doctor Blimber's.* Write a description of any meal which you have taken in company at your own school.

15. *The Building of the Albert Memorial.* How do you like the Albert Memorial now that it has been built? or Consider the merits and weaknesses of Lytton Strachey as an historian; or Discuss the couplet:

"An Englishman who sings at all  
Should do so at the Albert Hall."

16. *A Family Argument.* What qualities in this passage are among those which give Jane Austen so many devoted readers?

17. *Jubilee Day.* In what main respects does this account of Jubilee Day show the difference between the atmosphere and customs of those times and of to-day?

18. *Visiting at Cranford.* Contrast the social habits of the days of "Cranford" with those of post-war England.

19. *A Village Celebration.* Describe any business meeting at which you have been present, either in the country or town.

20. *A Pious Hyperbole.* "They give us greatness in words: in fact we are our servants' servants." Discuss this estimate of kingship.

21. *The Disarmament Commission.* Consider what light this passage throws on the characteristics of the different nations mentioned.

22. *Longer Sermons.* Write an article in favour of "Shorter Lectures."

23. *On Being a Jonah.* Write an essay "On Falling on One's Feet."

24. *A Meditation upon a Broomstick.* Compose "A Meditation upon a Clothes-brush."

25. *Literature.* Write out a speech proposing the toast of Science or Painting or Music.

26. *Recipe for an Epic Poem.* Write a recipe for a popular monthly magazine.

27. *Jargon.* Discuss the nature and defects of journalese.

28. *On Nothing.* Write an essay "On Something."

29. *Modernising Shakespeare.* Choose a speech from Shakespeare and either modernise it or translate it into modern French or German.

30. *Travellers.* To what extent do you agree with Sterne's

## ESSAY QUESTIONS

estimate of travellers? and say how far Sterne's views would have been influenced had he experienced travelling by train, car, or aeroplane, in the twentieth century.

31. *On Lying in Bed.* "Lying in bed would be an altogether supreme experience if only one had a coloured pencil long enough to draw on the ceiling." Describe what pictures you would draw if you were equipped with such a pencil.

32. *The State-Coach.* Describe what might have happened had China been presented by our Embassy with a motor-car when motors were first invented.

33. *The Anarchists.* Imagine and describe a subsequent adventure of the Anarchists.

34. *Commodore Trunnion's Wedding.* Consider with reference to this passage in what respect Smollett as a novelist is a forerunner of Dickens; or Reproduce this account of Trunnion's Wedding in about 500 words.

35. *Harris in the Maze.* Consider why Englishmen regard getting lost in a maze or being made to feel sick on roundabouts and swings as a form of amusement.

36. *A Drive in Rügen.* Retail the substance of this incident in not more than two pages.

37. *The Adventures of a Shilling.* Describe the adventures of a five-pound note.

38. *Trinket's Colt.* Examine the qualities revealed by this story which are typically Irish.

39. *The Happy Thinker Hunts.* Consider the pleasures and disadvantages of hunting, not forgetting the point of view of the fox.

40. *Crossing to France.* Describe your own experiences of a sea-crossing.

41. *The Departure of Papa.* In what respects does this story reveal characteristics of French life and personality?

42. *Odd Charges.* Write a story of your own entitled either "The Thought-reader" or "The Juggler" or "The Water-diviner."

## CONTEXT QUESTIONS

*Ascribe to their contexts and comment on :*

1. If I had been a Brobdingnagian spider as big as a Newfoundland she would not have acted differently.

2. He rose and capered, in sheer ecstasy.

3. Ben Gunn, or ole Petersen, yielded, tugged, and began to peruse.

4. "It is impossible to forget that which has not been."

5. "Quite all right, aren't you?" To which I reply, "Oh yes," and he laughs in a bright and scholastic way, and talks about the Matterhorn.

6. "Magnificent, magnificent! *Encore!* Do it again!"

7. Poor Mr. Cox! left gasping in his aquarium.

8. "Just a little, leetle glass, ladies, after the oysters and lobsters, you know."

9. Shortly afterwards Mr. Scott found some consolation in building the St. Pancras Hotel in a style of his own.

10. "A gaunt, black, towzled man, rough in speech, brooding like an old gipsy over his inch of clay pipe stuffed with shag and sucking in port wine with gusto."

11. And pray, what is man but a topsy-turvy creature, his animal faculties perpetually mounted on his rational, his head where his heels should be, grovelling on the earth?

12. No man, as Samuel Johnson said, is a hypocrite in his pleasures, and therefore, as we may add, it is better to allow every man, and even every donkey, to graze at will the common of literature, especially as they will do so whether you allow them or not.

13. Pick a large quantity of images and descriptions from Homer's "Iliad," with a spice or two of Virgil; and if there remain any overplus, you may lay them by for a skirmish. Season it well with similes, and it will make an excellent battle.

14. The lieutenant, whose steed had got the heels of the other, finding it would be great folly and presumption in him to pretend to keep the saddle with his wooden leg, very

## CONTEXT QUESTIONS

wisely took the opportunity of throwing himself off on his passage through a field of rich clover, among which he lay at his ease.

15. When he is found to over-reckon notoriously, he has one common evasion for all, and that is, to say it was a mistake.

16. "You may be struck with a fit, getting so red in the face after dinner, and we are but just out o' mourning, all of us—and all wi' gowns craped alike and just put by—it's very bad among sisters."

17. "Thank God," said the traveller, and put his pipe in his pocket.

18. "I will ask the most honourable interpreter to render into English the poor observations which I have had the honour to address to you."

19. The faster the one ran the faster the other followed him, brandishing the cane.

20. "Fancy the mater marrying Uncle Claudius when Dad hasn't been dead for a couple of months!"

THE END

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